omerset Maugham: An Appreciation by Richard Aldington

The Saturday Review of Literature

COLLEGIUM LIBRARY

Vol. XX No. 17 New York, Saturday, August 19, 1939 Ten Cents a Copy

"FAMILY ALBUM"
By Humphrey Pakington
Reviewed by George Dangerfield

"ALL THE TOMORROWS"
By Naomi Lane Babson
Reviewed by Alice Tisdale Hobart

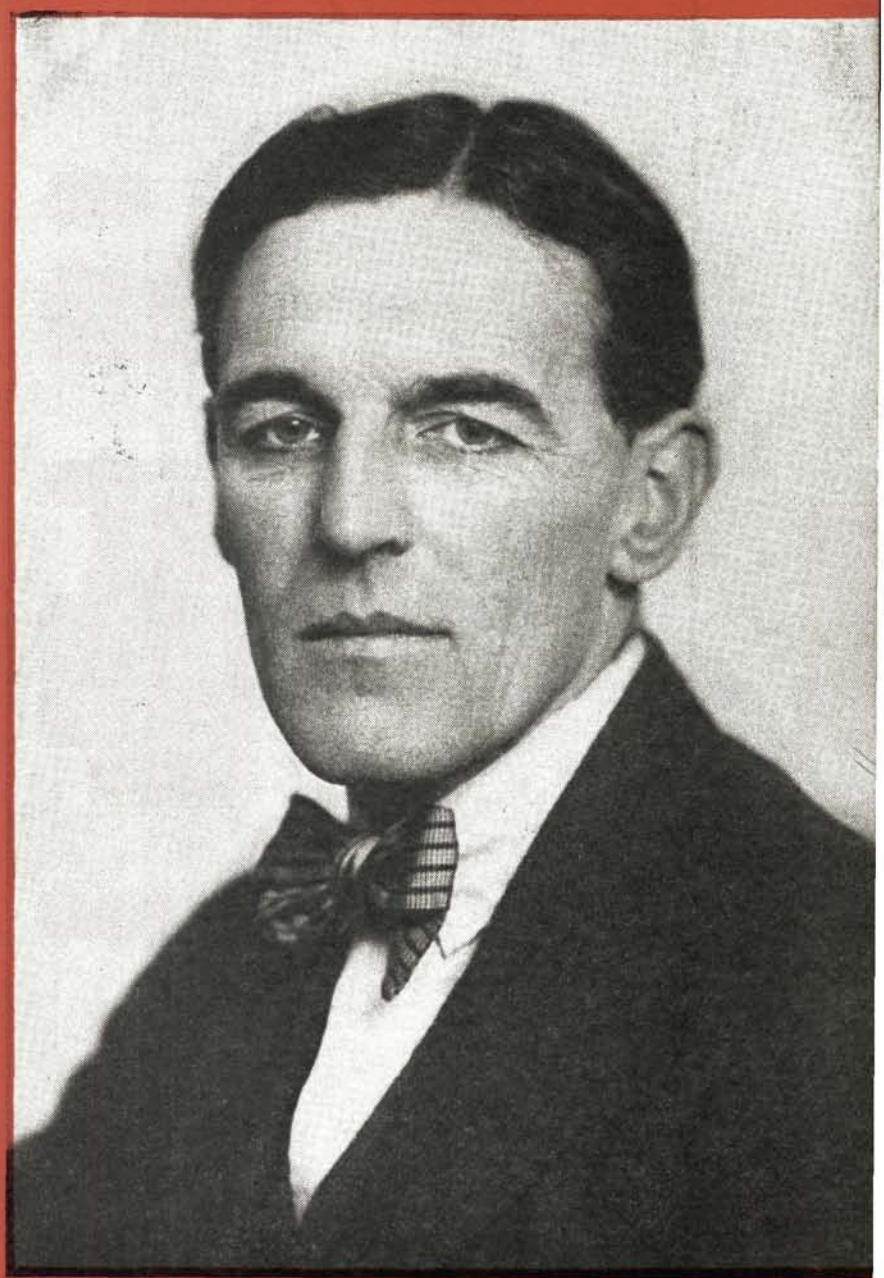
"SUTTER"
By James Peter Zollinger
Reviewed by Margaret Wallace

"A NATURALIST TRANSPLANTED"
By Donald Culross Peattie

"AS YOU LIKE IT"
Edited by George Lyman Kittredge
Reviewed by William T. Hastings

"THE MARCH OF MIND"
By F. Sherwood Taylor
Reviewed by George Russell Harrison

"A DUBLIN LETTER"
By Donagh MacDonagh



HUMPHREY PAKINGTON: . . . "I recommend 'Family Album' to all Pakington fans—may their numbers increase in the land." *(See page 5)*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOHN T. WHITAKER'S

First-hand, News-report on the

Americas to the South

HERE'S what the people of the United States should know about our Southern neighbors: What do they really think of us? To what extent has Fascism penetrated these key countries? What can we do to offset this infiltration and save peace and our trade? Mr. Whitaker, a foreign correspondent of long experience, travelled in Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico to get accurate and up-to-the-minute replies to these questions.

His "report," written in fast journalistic style is as readable as it is timely and informative. It will open many eyes to the rapidly developing new situations to the South. $2.50.

Special for those who follow "The Criminal Record"

Who Killed Aunt Maggie?

by Medora Field

A gorgeous thriller, entertaining, exciting and mystifying in exactly the proper proportions.

Aunt Maggie invited herself to a week-end party at a rural estate outside Atlanta, and is promptly murdered. Marooned by a storm, without lights, the other guests faced various terrors which are heightened by a second killing. Not until Sally Stuart falls downstairs is the villain unmasked. $2.00.

The Priory

by Dorothy Whipple

"A novel dealing with contemporary life in a way so refreshingly its own that the 528 pages seem not a word too long. In a delightfully intriguing fashion it solves the problems of an impoverished family."—*New York Times.* $2.50.

Abel Dayton

by Flannery Lewis

"An extraordinary fine novel. A fresh and lovely story of boyhood, youth and early manhood, as perfect as it is simple, bold, original and sensitive."—*New York Times.* $2.50.

At All Good Bookstores

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

60 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Somerset Maugham

AN APPRECIATION

BY RICHARD ALDINGTON

W. Somerset Maugham. From a painting by Gerald Kelly.

IN literature success has its penalties no less than failure, though doubtless it is easier to bear the former with philosophic calm. Somerset Maugham has been and still is one of the most consistently successful authors of his time; and at the same time he has almost stubbornly maintained his own point of view towards life and his slightly austere integrity as an artist. His attitude towards life is the not especially popular one of truth-seeker and truth-teller and his method as an artist is the exacting one of unadorned and uncompromising precision and clarity. In Maugham you will find none of those soft, comforting half-truths so eagerly snatched at by an uncritical public; none of those purple passages of eloquence which are aimed more at the viscera than at the brain; none of the pretentious vagueness which so easily passes as profundity. With an art as unflattering to human weaknesses as Stendhal's he has succeeded in attracting far more than Stendhal's "happy few."

Now, on the face of it, you would think that here was a situation exactly made for those "serious critics" who, in their own rather unctuous phrase, "are concerned to maintain the standards of contemporary literature." How do they explain the persistent popular success of a writer who never flatters his audience, never compromises with the truth as he sees it, never plays stylistic tricks, and remains quite indifferent to the ins and outs of literary fashion? They haven't attempted to do so. Dazzled and possibly a bit annoyed by the success, they have seen nothing else, and hastily and erroneously conclude that a writer who has continued to delight large audiences all over the world for several decades must be ephemeral and in some unspecified way unworthy of "serious consideration." Maugham has either been ignored or condescended to in a manner I find quite infuriating. What perverse nonsense it is to assume that a book or play which is immediately successful on a large scale must be bad! How more than vulgar to assume that because a writer makes no parade of "culture," he must therefore be uncultivated! My own impression is that Maugham knows more about literature, philosophy, and painting, and has better taste, than his condescending critics.

It is a great error on the part of the critics to suppose that a writer is uncultivated because he does not chatter the esthetic jargon of the epoch and parrot the sayings of one or two intellectualist clique-leaders. A really cultivated man like Maugham reads and judges for himself. When Maugham writes criticism (as in "The Summing Up" and the preface to his "Collected Short Stories") he is both interesting and acute. His remarks on Chekhov and Maupassant, for example, are wholly admirable. (I wish he would write more criticism—it is rare and so pleasant to come across a critic who is quite free from the offensive mannerisms of the professional book-harpies.)

But it is an even greater error to suppose that "culture" is any indication of a writer's ability to produce good plays, stories, and novels. Nobody ever went to a play because the author was an expert on Baroque architecture or got excited about a novelist because he knew Greek. Vastly more to the point is a wide and extensive knowledge of human beings, a genuine interest in them for their own sake. Here, I think, we come to the first reason for Maugham's success as a writer. He is greatly gifted both as an unconscious and a conscious observer of human beings, and he possesses an exact and vivid memory. Maugham is naturally a shy man, and the shy man's instinctive wish to avoid his fellow creatures could only have been broken down by an even greater interest in them and passion for the art of presenting them in words.

I once heard a pretentious high-brow say languidly that he couldn't read Maugham, "because he always writes about the bourgeoisie." This person, I may say, was the author of much-discussed and much-praised works of criticism and supposed to be quite a literary dictator in his way. But what an absurd remark! If you are going to write about living human beings, how on earth can you ignore one of the largest and most important groups? And in Maugham's case it simply isn't true. In "The Moon and Sixpence" he has produced a vivid and convincing picture of the artist who will sacrifice everything for the sake of art. (Incidentally, the popular success of that book is one of Maugham's triumphs. It would be difficult to imagine a more "unpleasant" and "unpopular" character than Strickland, who occupies the whole centre of the book. Yet by

Next Week

CHILDREN OF GOD
By VARDIS FISHER
Reviewed by Bernard DeVoto

CHRIST IN CONCRETE
By PIETRO DI DONATO
Reviewed by Louis Adamic

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sheer mastery of his art Maugham compelled multitudes of readers to find matter for entertainment in the impossible Strickland.)

Again, in "Cakes and Ale," there is the most amusing "private life" of the writer who from a shabby and disreputable past became a Grand Old Man of English letters, merely because he lived to a great age and had a second wife and a literary Egeria who were experts in dissimulation and intrigue. The same book contains a ruthless exposure of the successful literary faker of our own time, so true and so vivid that Alroy Kear becomes a living symbol of the whole literary racket in London.

Here, offhand, are three non-bourgeois characters. "Of Human Bondage," with its astonishing profusion of characters, will alone furnish many more. Think of Mildred, the waitress, who inspires Philip with so disastrous a passion; the poor little hack-writer and super, Norah, who consoles him; Sally at the hop-picking; and then the working-class people Philip gets to know as a doctor. In the same book there are clear-cut sketches of the Paris Bohemians, Lawson, Clutton, Cronshaw, Miss Price. And, not to multiply examples from other books, only remember Maugham's portraits of Chinese and Malays, and the riff-raff of the East like Ginger Ted and the superbly vulgar prostitute in "Rain." And this is the author who, according to a critic of allegedly international status, "always writes about the bourgeoisie" and *therefore* is not an artist!

A lot of humbug is being published now about the working class both by "proletarian" authors and by "socially conscious" sympathizers, who seem agreed that art consists of systematic falsification of truth for political purposes. False presentation, asking for false compassion and indignation, can arouse little but contempt in a discerning reader. Maugham's approach is entirely different. "Of Human Bondage" presents incidentally a picture of working class life and characters as they really are, with all their imperfections. But Maugham does not fail to ask for and obtain deep compassion when the moment comes. I know very few incidents in fiction so deeply moving as the death in childbirth of the girl wife and the inarticulate grief and despair of the young husband. The sobriety and clarity with which the scene is presented make the pathos almost unendurable. I cannot imagine why a writer with such genuine and profound compassion in him should be described as "cynical" and "cruel." Or rather, I can imagine. People would like him to falsify his clear-sighted vision of truth, and put false pathos into situations and characters Maugham rightly sees to be only deserving of ridicule and contempt.

But for a dramatist and fiction writer it is not enough to have a profound knowledge of people and the ability to present them in words as they really are. There must be a pattern of action. They must be showed, and showed convincingly in action. We must see them entering a situation, involved in it, and in the end admit freely that a life or lives have been changed. Merely to suggest "atmosphere" and to leave the reader to invent significance and imagine an ending is evading the difficulty. The art of successful plotting may seem an inferior one to those who have never attempted it. Those who have made the attempt, know better. It is a natural gift, which may be developed and perfected, but cannot be acquired by mere industry. And the same is true of the *art de raconter,* which is not quite what is meant in English by "telling a story." It is the art of telling a story in such a manner that in spite of himself the reader or listener is compelled to give his attention and interest. That, too, is a natural gift.

All the "art and craft of fiction" theories about how these two gifts may be acquired or simulated artificially are so much moonshine. Good stories, well told in print, well presented on the stage, are what the world is prepared to reward handsomely. If the art or knack of producing them could be taught or acquired, what a rush there would be! It is obvious from his early novels and plays that Maugham started with both the gift of narrative and the gift of plotting. It is also obvious that he has given much thought and pains to perfecting these gifts. In their fatuous way the critics have recognized this by dubbing Maugham "competent." The right word is "masterly." Maugham is one of those uncommon writers who think, and think clearly and thoroughly, before they begin to write. He never rambles or improvises. You feel that before he puts his pen to paper he is the master of all his characters and knows exactly what he intends to do with them. One result of all this is the uniformly high level of his writing, something of the same unstrained excellence you find in the prose of Voltaire. If Maugham has good days and off days, there is no sign of it in his writing. When a story or a play seems better than some of the others, the only assignable reason is that somehow the intrinsic interest and excitement of the subject are greater. That is a purely personal matter for the reader, and perhaps explains why readers differ so much about what is "Maugham's best work."

One of the worst disadvantages of "the literary life" is it narrowness. Arthur Symons once said very truly that a villa and books never yet made a poet. And the kind of society generally frequented by literary people has seldom benefited a novelist. However unpleasant the experience may have been Maugham undoubtedly profited as a writer by contact with other kinds of life before literary success enabled him to live as he chose. And in later life it has been a distinct asset to him that he rather dislikes the company of literary people and is not a social star. His early stage successes forced him to meet well-known theatrical people and the pre-war social world of London. His work ("Theatre," for instance) shows that he made excellent use of the opportunity, but he refused to tie himself to fashionable social life. Most authors now travel extensively, but Maugham has the distinction of having travelled intelligently and observantly. What Spain has

(*Continued on page* 12)

Heat Wave

BY SARA KOLB DANNER

THE day is tropical and scarcely to be borne
Not even the most transient breeze is stirring,
The heat waits like a contented tiger purring
But never wholly asleep—showing her scorn
Of the poor human tribe, ready to spring
And throttle out life with one swift, breathless dart
Or to worry and maltreat the frightened heart
Before she gives the last distainful fling;
Even young beauty wilts upon its stem
Like wild flowers growing on a country road
Fragile and lovely—uprooted without a thought
Then left to die where feet will trample them,
Life is a mercurial episode
And by its fluctuations we are caught.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Company, Inc., 420 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. Joseph Hilton Smyth, President; Harrison Smith, Vice-President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription $4 a year; Canada $4.50. Vol. XX, No. 17, August 19, 1939. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Digressions at Irregular Intervals

FAMILY ALBUM. By Humphrey Pakington. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1939. 340 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

HUMPHREY PAKINGTON is not the sort of man, one would have thought, to don with any alacrity the literary hair-shirt. He is a hapazard writer. His novels proceed, more or less, until he is tired of writing them, at which point somebody is married off to somebody else, and that's that. In "Family Album," however, each chapter is provided, not only with a number and title, but with a date; and this concession to orthodox historical fiction may give some of his warmer admirers cause for alarm. "Lord Boscaske Prophesies 1914," "Knitting Bee 1919" have an odd appearance. Surely, we exclaim, Mr. Pakington is not disciplining himself—Mr. Pakington, whose charm hitherto has consisted in the fact that he seems to know almost nothing about writing a novel, and what's more doesn't seem to care.

But the alarm will not last very long. The Diligent Chronology—and it *is* diligent—of "Family Album" is merely an ingenious and successful attempt of Mr. Pakington's to exploit his own deficiencies. His novels are a series of digressions strung at irregular intervals along an extremely thin string of story, with practically no plot at all. And when I say "practically no plot" I am putting it mildly, for, psychologically, hardly anything *ever* happens to a Pakington character. It therefore seems a very good idea of Mr. Pakington's in "Family Album" to invent his digressions with an historical dignity; so that a village concert, a tennis party, a piece of gossip, merely by being labelled "1901", or "1907" or "1910", become so magnificently irrelevant as to be almost formal.

His irrelevance, after all, is what binds us to Mr. Pakington, if we like him at all, and I for one like him very much. Why do we read him? Not to discover what is to happen next to Johnnie Bartlett, the hero of "Family Album." Johnnie is an agreeable child, an agreeable youth, and an agreeable middle-aged man. He marries the girl he loves and when she dies he marries, after a suitable interval, the girl who has always loved him. No, the reason why one reads Mr. Pakington is because one always hopes to find on turning the next page some minor character who will delay the story for a while with amiable nonsense, and then not infrequently just disappear. Sir Gerald Frogg, the medico "who was only called in when it was quite certain the patient could not live," is such a character. Aunts Daisy and Dora, though they bob in and out of the novel with some persistence, are on similar lines. They add nothing to the action; it would not have mattered to anyone in the book if they had not been there at all: yet how necessary they are if the reader is to be kept in a good humor!

All in all, this is a slightly satirical account of upper middle-class English life, from 1887-1938, with all the proper family fixings, including a matriarchal grandmother. The book has a fresh early morning quality. There is tragedy, to be sure, yet it leaves only a light footprint in the dew. I recommend "Family Album" to all Pakington fans—may their number increase in the land. And I continue to think that this author's work, with its naval heroes, its pert pretty heroines, its foolish peers, comes very close to musical comedy; except, of course, that there isn't any music.

The Saturday Review *last week presented as a Book Preview the episode of Sir Gerald Frogg referred to above.*

COLLEGE LIBRARY

Self-Willed Chinese Women

ALL THE TOMORROWS. By Naomi Lane Babson. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1939. 390 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ALICE TISDALE HOBART

NAOMI LANE BABSON has found in this book a new approach to China. In each generation of the Lo family there appears a woman so vital that she sets aside the prevailing customs of her day and strikes out boldly for herself. All of us who have lived in China any length of time know this type of Chinese woman and yet I think she has never been fully brought out in our fiction. Very surely Mrs. Babson has pictured her—self-willed, fearless, adventurous, and efficient, drawing her each time to the scale of her generation.

Mrs. Babson begins her story with the Chinese girl of the sixties, when Chinese women were muffled in seclusion. Fragrant Incense, clad in blue coat and trousers, with her black braid hanging to her knees and her tiny shoes embroidered in plum blossoms, does nothing more rebellious than stand in the doorway of the patriarchal mansion buying sweetmeats of the street vendor. But his seemingly small-scaled rebellion against the customs of her generation is as momentous as are the larger-scaled rebellions of her descendants. An old man passing by sees her and covets her for his secondary wife. And so her revolutionary spirit is introduced into the Lo family, never to die out.

Her daughter, Apricot, very early strikes away the conventions when at three she says to her father, "I *do* not fear you. I fear no one. I fear nothing in the world." He had come upon her wading with a servant maid in a pool, with only an embroidered jacket covering the upper part of her chubby body, and she carried some of his favorite blossoms in her arms. She splashed through the shallow water till she was close to him, then smiled beguilingly at him, her eyes

Jacket Design for "All the Tomorrows"

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

looking up through lowered lashes—"You are the father-one, and you will not beat me." That she rebelled later against foot-binding and later still against the seclusion of the women's quarters was in the spirit of Fragrant Incense. She slipped away through the back entrance of the patriarchal home to see a little of the world.

Although Mrs. Babson does not handle very convincingly the incident of Apricot's meeting with a white man, she does very adroitly show how the drop of white blood is submerged in the Lo family. The vibrant qualities of this strong woman of the Chinese people appear again in the great-granddaughter of Fragrant Incense.

Jade, the daughter of the wealthy Los living today in Hongkong, joins the revolutionary movement of the new, awakening China. She leaves her rich home, becomes a Communist, marries a soldier, bears a daughter called Freedom. When the Communists unite with the other groups against the aggression of Japan in China, she wishes to become a spy, and returns home, but only to leave Freedom there. Her sister sees them getting out of the taxi, looking like a strange man and a little boy, for both are in khaki uniform, puttees, and soldiers caps, and have their hair cut short.

Although Mrs. Babson is occupied with the women of China, she never for one instant lets you forget that sons are the most important thing in life to the Chinese, and that to bear them is the duty and desire of every Chinese woman.

The story is very pertinent to what is happening in China today. Mrs. Babson's women give us a key to the understanding of such a figure as Madame Chiang-Kai-Shek.

Denizens of Sea and Land

TURTLES OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. By Clifford H. Pope. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1939. 343 *pp. and index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by C. H. CURRAN

TURTLES are among the most interesting animals in the world, not only because they are supposed to be slow, plodding, but sure fellows in a race, but because many of them have rather strange habits and a number of them are of great economic importance. According to Mr. Pope you can eat them, drink them (as soup), wear them as combs and rims for spectacles, and so on. Not only are they useful in the economic life of man but they are also of value in the control of invertebrate animals that are directly and indirectly pests of man.

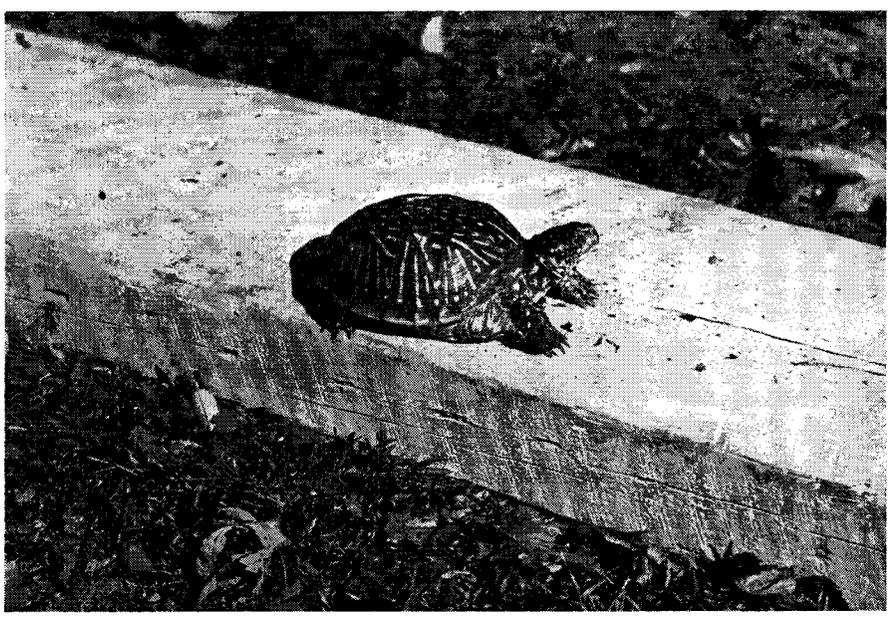
Turtles, like other reptiles, have adapted themselves for life on land and in aquatic environment. They are the first vertebrates to leave the sea and make their home on land, so it is not strange that they should now be found, not only in water, but also in desert areas. Their food is extremely varied, but most of those raised in captivity do extremely well on a diet of raw, lean beefsteak.

In the perusal of this book on turtles one is struck by the thoroughness with which these animals are discussed. In his ever thorough way Mr. Pope has gathered an enormous amount of data concerning each of the species, has analyzed the information thoroughly and has presented it in a most interesting manner. The treatment of each species follows a definite pattern, covering the habits, habitat, distribution, laying habits, mating habits, and so on. In fact, when one has read the information concerning each species, he knows all that the most expert scientist knows about it, and there is nothing in the life of the turtle that has been concealed.

There has never before been a book dealing with the American turtles as a whole so it is not necessary to state that this is the best book of its kind. However, it is necessary to assert that it is an extremely fine piece of work. The ninety-nine illustrations are exceptionally fine and these, together with the simple keys for the separation of the species, should enable anyone to identify any turtle that might be found, and those who keep turtles as pets will find full instructions.

Every scientist will want a copy of this book as a handy reference and everyone who has observed these curious animals will want it in order to learn about them. It is well prepared and finely printed—a credit to author and publisher.

C. H. Curran is assistant curator of diptera at the American Museum of Natural History.



Ornate Box Turtle from Reno County, Kansas.

The Grand Old Man

GLADSTONE AND THE IRISH NATION. By J. L. Hammond. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1939. 740 *pp.* $12.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER THOMSON

IN this illuminating book Mr. Hammond presents a complete, detailed account of the courageous and pertinacious crusade Gladstone carried on to right the wrongs inflicted upon Ireland by British neglect and misrule. He has also given us the best analysis yet to appear within the covers of a single volume of the complex and baffling character of the Grand Old Man of British politics. In dealing with a subject so complicated and so full of national and personal rancor, it is difficult to be fair to all the protagonists. Yet Hammond is as eminently fair to Gladstone's associates and opponents as he is to Gladstone himself.

By his painstaking sifting of a vast amount of printed and manuscript material, of which the Gladstone Papers have been most enlightening, Hammond has cleared Gladstone's name of the charge of hypocrisy and political ambition in connection with the Irish question. Gladstone changed his mind about Parnell only once—when he became convinced in 1882 of the Irish leader's willingness to work for reform without violence—and his repudiation of Parnell's leadership after

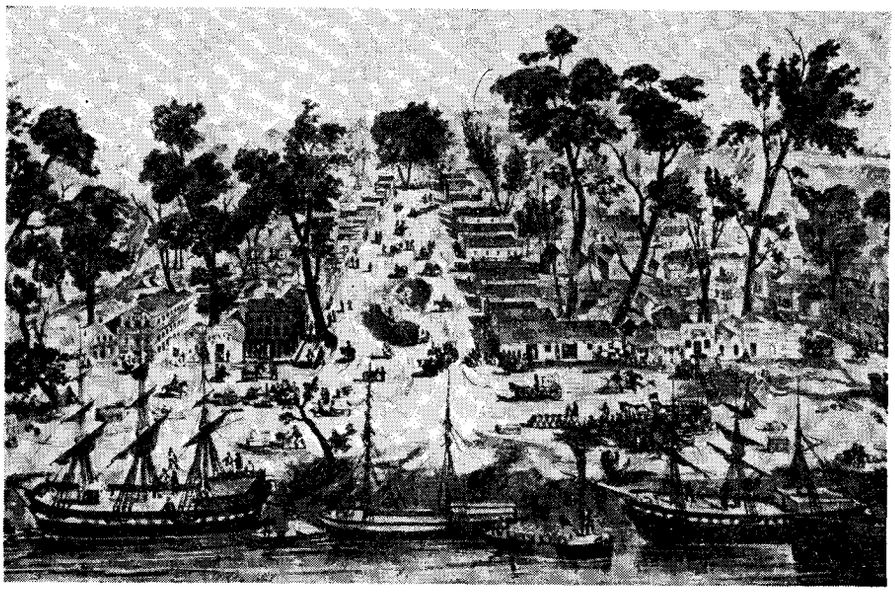
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the revelations of the O'Shea divorce case is condemned not as a bit of pious hypocrisy but as lack of judgment. Far from taking up Home Rule in 1886 to obtain the votes of the Irish Nationalists for the Liberal party, Gladstone, whose mind had already been moving towards this solution of Irish aspirations in the seventies, delayed adopting it as the official policy of the Liberal party so long as there remained a hope that it might be achieved on a non-party basis under the sponsorship of the Conservatives.

If there is a villain in the piece, he is a collective sort of villain—the Englishman of class and education whose opposition to Gladstone's measures for Ireland may be summed up in three words: property, Protestantism, and power. If there is a personal villain, he is O'Shea, whose tricky dealings made the Kilmainham Treaty appear as a political trade, and who later poisoned Chamberlain's mind against Parnell. Chamberlain appears again and again as the key to the success or failure of Gladstone's Irish policy, and it is perhaps one of the major tragedies of British politics that the points of view of the two men were so far apart that Gladstone made no really serious effort to hold the great Birmingham radical among his followers.

To the questions why Gladstone took up the cause of Ireland in the first place and why, despite the defection of Whigs and Radicals, he was able to muster half the voting strength of Britain to the cause of Home Rule in 1886 and more than half in 1893, Hammond gives the following answer. The compelling influence of religion on his life gave Gladstone a European point of view, for his religion was based on a broad historical perspective, in which Homer had a place alongside the Bible, St. Augustine, Dante, and Bishop Butler. Hence he was more keenly aware than his English contemporaries of England's obligations, not only to herself and Ireland, but to Europe. His religion also made him a democrat. That he did not succeed in breaking down completely the prejudices against Ireland of the propertied and educated classes in England is the measure of his failure. The measure of his success lies in the devoted attachment of the masses, who rejected Chamberlain's appeal to their self-interest but responded to Gladstone's appeal to their sense of justice and fair play. Here Gladstone found men like Homer's, and men like himself—" 'still fierce with freedom', and not yet corrupted with power."

Alexander Thomson is a member of the department of history and government of Wesleyan University.



View of Sacramento City in Sutter's time. From a lithograph by G. V. Cooper.

Sutter of "Sutter's Gold"

SUTTER. By James Peter Zollinger. New York: Oxford University Press. 1939. 374 *pp. and index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET WALLACE

JUST one hundred years ago, in 1839, America's last great colonial pioneer landed in California and inaugurated one of the most remarkable careers this continent ever saw. That gold was discovered on John Augustus Sutter's property was, of course, an accident. An accident sufficiently portentous in itself to have kept his name alive. It seems to have been an accident also that this Swiss adventurer—who, in spite of his pretensions, knew nothing of military science—located his fort at a strategic point commanding the northern portion of California. Thus it was possible for Sherman to say: "To him, more than to any single person, are we indebted for the conquest of California with all its treasures."

There was no accident in the combination of flaring ambition and financial incompetence which drove Sutter across half the world to his strange destiny. No man's fate was ever more firmly rooted in his character. In Switzerland Sutter already had contrived one spectacular failure. He left a wife and family behind him, and a debt larger than one would have thought possible for a small drygoods merchant. At the same time he abandoned his humble origins. He arrived in California equipped with little beside his charm of manner and the glamorous military past he had invented en route. Everything else—and this included an empire more than baronial in extent — he obtained on credit.

It is a thoroughly unlikely story which actually happened. James Peter Zollinger, who has put a staggering amount of research into this biography, sets forth more of the man than we ever knew before. Sutter lied so consistently about himself that it is not surprising some of the lies were perpetuated as history. Yet the truth tops any conceivable invention. No novelist in his right mind would touch the chronicle of this peasant who dreamed himself into the role of great gentleman, this gifted spellbinder who believed every tall story he heard and advanced money on it, this shopkeeper who set himself up as a sultan among the squaws and Kanakas, who ran a letter of introduction into a glittering fortune which he lost and wasted and gave away, who ended his life as an exile petitioning Congress to give him back his principality.

This biography will be called definitive. On the score of scholarship alone it richly deserves the term. One thing at least is certain—no one hereafter can write of Sutter without putting himself in Mr. Zollinger's debt. If the character of the great Californian is not entirely unriddled, I do not know that the author can be blamed. The man was compounded of paradox. One's chief complaint is perhaps an ungracious one. Mr. Zollinger, who is Swiss by birth, has more than a little trouble with his informal English diction. He mangles his metaphors recklessly and has a way of choosing words which sound rather like the one he is looking for.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Saturday Review
of Literature

GEORGE STEVENS..... Editor
JOSEPH HILTON SMYTH, HARRISON SMITH .... Publishers
AMY LOVEMAN..... Associate Editor
HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT, CHRISTOPHER MORLEY Contributing Editors

THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

THE SATURDAY REVIEW cannot assume responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts submitted without an addressed envelope and the necessary postage.

Copyright, 1939, Saturday Review Co., Inc.

Wanted—A History

THE reprinting of Vernon L. Parrington's "Main Currents in American Thought,"* in one volume, at a low price for three books in one, should be called to the attention of the general reader. Professor Parrington's distinguished work has been reviewed, and, since his death, rereviewed. In spite of the fragmentary last volume, which the unfortunate ending of his life left to be concluded from notes and lectures, his history of American letters is still the most stimulating, widest viewed, most philosophical, and most useful of all American literary histories. It is questionable whether it is not still the only extensive literary history of America that can be read with both profit and confidence, since Parrington alone has conceived of our literature as a product of all the forces that made the American nation, and, leaving esthetic estimates to others, has given us, essentially, a history of the American mind in the act of expression, with all the hinterland of causes for the activities of that mind. Hence, while the critic of literature must often look elsewhere for what he needs of estimate and appraisal, the reader seeking for instruction as to what and why we wrote will find this work more satisfactory than any other. It is true that Parrington's bias—and all historians have their biases—was democratic rather than federalistic or republican like the bias of his New England predecessors; he was national rather than regional in his viewpoint; Jeffersonian rather than Hamiltonian in his sense of values. Yet, on the whole, he here better represents the prevailing attitude of the American mind at large, in its idealism and its equalitarianism, than did the scholars who preceded him. Since the first publication of his first volume in 1927, the influence of his ideas and his interpretations has been persuasive, if not dominant, in all historical writing about American literary history.

A committee of the American section of the Modern Language Association of America has recently voted to sponsor a new and coöperative history of American letters. They feel, as Parrington himself felt, that the job is too much for one man. The knowledge of our past has immensely increased since the war. A library of special studies is available. There are many specialists who now know without guesswork the facts about areas of information which were almost uncharted twenty years ago. Yet we are not much further on our way toward a sound and enlightening view of literary expression in America as a whole than when Parrington wrote.

"The Cambridge History of American Literature," a coöperative work in several volumes of many American scholars, which antedates the history of Parrington, can be regarded only as a valuable storehouse of facts and opinions. No assemblage of specialists' articles, lacking philosophical or rhetorical coherence as a whole, can be regarded as successful history. History can no more be written that way than science can be advanced by unrelated experiments. Parrington tackled the job that the Cambridge historians left where they found it; he did present a philosophical interpretation of American literary history, but at the risk of skimming over much thin ice, and he left esthetic and purely literary values to be picked up later. But you cannot leave such values out of a definitive history or minimize them. Hugh Legaré or Beverly Tucker, for instance, may be of real importance for American history, but if it is literary history that is being written, sooner or later we must face the question: How important were they as writers, as artists, as agents of esthetic and intellectual expression with values transcending the circumstances of their little arc of the history of our republic? The definitive history of the American mind in literature must suffer from no limitations of the individual, must not be cramped in space, must have a broad philosophy of literary history and realize it in execution. One man may be able to plan it, but many minds must go to its making.

How? The English method of coöperative endeavor, exemplified in "The Cambridge History of American Literature," will never fit our needs, no matter if reorganized and stretched to twenty volumes. It has an irresistible attraction for university departments of advanced study, for it makes it possible for leading scholars to set all their students to work upon specialties, and in an impressive publication earn reputation for themselves and for their universities. But such a history has, for the Americans of this time, two insuperable disadvantages. If attempted, it will become just another encyclopedia, and, with bibliographies at our disposal, we do not need another encyclopedia, we need a history, factual, but also critical and philosophical, which will tell us what we have done as a literary nation, why and how we have done it, and when and where it is important for civilization as well as for our own culture. No miscellaneous collection of graduate students and professors, working on assignment, will ever do that.

The second objection is even stronger, and should be pondered by the many new scholars now working in the rich fields of American social history. Unlike Parrington, who wrote for the intelligent, educated, and interested layman, the Cambridge History was written by scholars for scholars. That accounts for its richness in detail and also for its relative failure to contribute ideas to American life. Scholars work, and should work, for the sake of scholarship; but the history which should result from their endeavors, must, if it is to be living history, be designed to give all the truth and its shadings to the culture in which they live. Which means, simply, that the comprehensive American literary history which we need in a time when American values are being redefined and reassorted, must be unified in scope, philosophic in approach, matured by a full knowledge of all sources of information, and, most of all, well composed and well written. Its audience must be the lawyer, doctor, minister, business man, craftsman, scientist, and intelligent housewife or woman worker, not just other specialists in the field. Until an American literary history is written which will be read as readily as Gibbon, Macaulay, Parkman were read, the job prepared will be left unfinished. It is questionable whether, if American literary history is not now important enough to be presented in a great work for the public at large, it is worth the excessive labor in scholarship now engaged in its making. Of course it is worthy of the attention of a wide public, but many scholars do not seem to think so.

This is no place to set down specifications. But it may be suggested that Parrington's success in approaching the problem may point a way. A Parrington at the head of a writers committee empowered to draft the research of American scholars, digest, and assimilate it for a work of several volumes written for that portion of the American public aware of history and craving it, might, and should,

*MAIN CURRENTS IN AMERICAN THOUGHT. By Vernon L. Parrington. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1939. 429 pp. & index. $3.45.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

give us a standard history of American literature that would be as influential in American culture of the next half century as have been the great histories of the past. Nor would the many scholars contributing the source materials indispensable for such a work, go without representation. For accompanying such a fundamental history would be a series of volumes containing the bibliographies, biographical and other special studies, notes, and special researches in difficult fields which would enable the scholars to test the facts and theories upon which their interpretation of our literary history was based.

The scholarship is available. Leadership, now that Parrington is dead, is not so easy to secure. And can a committee write a book? These problems are difficult to solve, but it is better to try to answer them than to keep on piling up masses of unresolved, uninterpreted facts, raw materials which never enter into the metabolism of the American imagination.

H. S. C.

Leonard Merrick

LEONARD MERRICK, who died the other day and on whom the *Saturday Review* intends to print more extended notice shortly, has often been called "the author's author." Early disappointed in his hopes as an actor, he took to writing, and for a considerable period was as unsuccessful at that as on the stage. But the literary men of his time discovered him, and the praise of such writers as Barrie, Pinero, Wells, Howells, and Chesterton established his reputation. Perhaps his death will bring to the attention of a new public a talent that of late has been obscured.

A. L.

Letters to the Editor: *Is the Lost Word "Sciolism" or Another?*

Wanted: Data on Daniel Morgan

SIR: — In completing the research for a biography of General Daniel Morgan, celebrated leader of riflemen in the Revolutionary War and one of our most colorful and picturesque historical characters, I am trying to locate all extant manuscripts by, to, or about him. Contrary to a general belief, Morgan carried on a rather extensive correspondence, especially with his old comrades of the War, as is shown by some of his very interesting letters which I have found. In addition to letters in various libraries, many have gone into private collections. I should be pleased to hear from persons owning Morgan letters or having any material relating to him. I am especially eager to locate the manuscript of Rev. William Hill, Morgan's pastor at Winchester who collected data for a life of the General. Any material sent to me will be carefully treated, returned, and duly acknowledged.

B. FLOYD FLICKINGER.

204 South Cameron Street,
Winchester, Va.

Found at Last

SIR:—I think I can help the lady from Beverly Hills, California who lost that lovely but elusive word meaning: "a large superficial knowledge." I had much the same experience with this word. I heard it first from a minister who used it in his sermon so I knew that it was a perfectly good word. I jotted it down on a scrap of paper, took it home and later lost it, sad to say. For five years that word was lost, and I looked high and low for it. I ordered the coal ashes sifted; accused the Scottie pup of chewing it up, and even looked under the wings of Twinkle, our pet canary. Finally, this spring the word turned up with the annual house cleaning, and where do you think the maid found it? That sly, elusive word was all tangled up in the fringe of an oriental rug. And what was the word do you suppose? *Megalopansophism.*

If the lady would like a Latin word better, I can give her a bargain at ninety-eight cents in the word, *Magnascientiasciolism.*

GEORGE W. LYON.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Is It Sciolism?

SIR:—On page 22 of your issue of July 29, was a letter which I found very interesting. In it, Isabelle T. Lindsay asks for a word which is defined as meaning "A large superficial knowledge." Among the words given in Roget's "Thesaurus" on the page devoted to knowledge and ignorance is the word "sciolism." "Webster" defines it as "superficial knowledge;" the "New Standard Dictionary" gives the definition: "pretentious superficial knowledge." Can this be the word for which your correspondent is searching?" I am sure it "Rolls off the tongue" very satisfactorily.

FRANCES E. HOLMES.

Montpelier, Vt.

A larger number of letters have come in suggesting the word "sciolism."—Editor.

Or Perhaps This?

SIR:—In re "Word Wanted" by Isabelle T. Lindsay—I have spent some time looking for combinations of superficial and encyclopedic and failing I am sending "cursocyclopaedic" to use until she finds hers.

Look up parts and you'll see for yourself it means just that—and *I'm* sure it should be a good word because I made it myself.

OPAL WATKINS NEGUS.

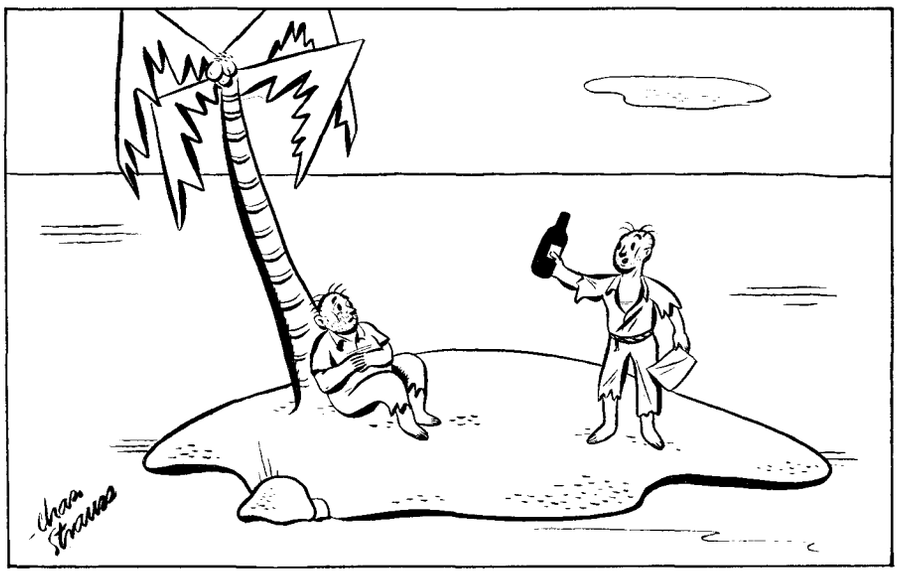
Iowa City, Ia.

Thomas Barton

SIR:—I am engaged upon a biography of Thomas Barton (1730-1780), Angelican clergyman of colonial Pennsylvania and brother-in-law of David Rittenhouse the astronomer. Any information regarding him will be appreciated; and any family letters or other documents sent in will be promptly returned and gratefully acknowledged.

EDGAR L. PENNINGTON.

Miami, Fla.



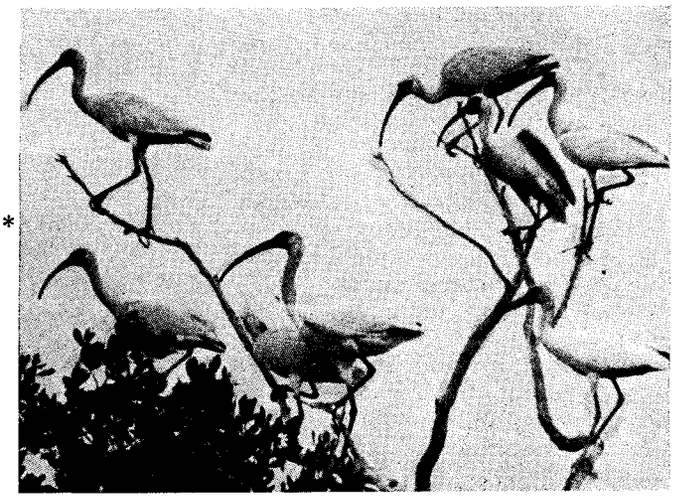
"Here's my letter back with a rejection slip!"

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOK PREVIEW

A Naturalist Transplanted*

BY DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE



"You get a broad picture of life from an intensive study of a limited biota."

WHEN a naturalist is thoroughly comfortable and settled, it is time to uproot him.

Only by long residence or repeated field experience can he familiarize himself with his environment till he knows every bird by its least, sleepy call-note, and any leaf, even with his eyes closed, by the feel of it between his fingers and the crushed scent held to his nostrils. By the time he can confidently tell you when to expect this migrant or where to look for that blossom, he needs to be routed out of clover, and thrown into nettles.

For the danger is that though he grow toward the center, as specialists and introspectives will, he will cease to grow taller or to strike new root. Contentment is the sweetest consolation and the most alarming symptom of middle age. When you become savagely parochial, you are old indeed, and may expect stiffening of the joints.

True that you may reap great harvest from a small field. You get a broad picture of life from an intensive study of a limited biota, which is a total community of plants and animals. The invalid Darwin, who never traveled after his youthful voyage on the *Beagle,* did wonders, as all the world knows, with the gentle flora of the English countryside, discovering major laws with cowslips and bee orchis and mildly insectivorous sundews. Fabre, bitterly poor, bound close to his hearth by gruelling duties, found among the insects of Provence adventures high as any in the Ring or Round Table. Thoreau, almost morbidly homekeeping, could boast that he traveled widely, around Concord, and the curate soul of Gilbert White skimmed like a swallow round and round the steeple of Selborne church.

I had made what virtue I could out of my own inability to go journeying. A record I called an almanac, because it was written out of the jottings of my daily round through the seasons, came out of six Virginia years just over the river from Washington. During those years I saw not even the not-distant Blue Ridge, nor yet Chesapeake Bay, still less the Shenandoah or the Great Dismal Swamp. There followed five years of domestic life on the Riviera, when I could travel just as far as I could walk and be back by nightfall. It is best in this life, I told myself, to love what you get and really to see what you are looking at from your work bench. Returned to America, still without a car and with less money than ever, I lived three years in a prairie grove, without once leaving it as long as overnight. On the biota of that one square mile I can vaunt that I am the best informed man in the world.

Then all at once the luck changed, and I could make a choice of good things. Out of habit and old love, I chose the Carolina Blue Ridge. There was a little valley there, with an orchard in it, circled by mountain woods, and as a boy I used to lie on my back in the meadow grass under the apple trees and plan the day when I would build a house there and put my wife and children in it. Somebody else had that good idea and carried it out, but my luck held, for when we went south the house he had built in that forest cup was for rent, and we moved into it. I loved it gratefully, and got not one new notion from it.

As spring drowsed fragrantly into the premature southern summer, I knew that I needed a slap. I needed (I had known it for years) western Nature, a thing unlearned and hard and male. I looked toward it as to a man you want to make your friend, who is to be bound to you not by the approaches that win a woman, but by muscular thinking and by performance worthy of his own.

My wife packed eleven trunks and I nailed up ten crates of books. At last we found ourselves journeying across the high plains of the prairie states, straining to catch the first glimpse of the front wall of the Rockies.

Anywhere on the prairies, I reflected, a naturalist could have stayed and dug himself in. They have never yet had their interpreter. They would demand in him a different temperament from the sort that found content in the hedged world of Selborne village or around Walden Pond. The prairies require the courage and far sight of youth. There is no close-up here and no detail. Instead, there is horizon like the sea line; there are seas of grass here, running before an unwearied wind, waves of grass winnowing one way to show all silver and dimpling another to darken all green. But the sound, when the car stops, of the wind in the telegraph wires, in the blades of the grain and the long bearded awns upon it, is not oceanic; it is keen and thin and high, sorrowful in the sun as a grave without shade.

In this world, without bounds save the optical rim, in the grassland kingdom of the composites, the mind becomes drugged. Miles and miles and miles of it, at unbroken speed, or taken in a long breath in the sunny dust of the wayside. The heat and the immense arc of the sky, the prevailing westerlies and the sense, almost suffocating, of being land-locked at the center of a vast continent, become at last hypnotic. You are conscious only of increasing aridity, of grass growing shorter and shorter, and sparser. You have forgotten the Rockies, despaired of them.

When, topping a rise, you see the first snow hoods like the sails of ships

*THE SATURDAY REVIEW presents this week a section from Mr. Peattie's "Flowering Earth," shortly to be published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the sea line. At first you take them for a dreamy cloud bank. Or, if you have thirsted for them as for years I did, a mirage. In the westward rush, the mirage becomes suspicion, then a certainty, then a majestic reality of marching, swinging peaks, with dark coniferous bands upon their flanks, and cliffs rising ever more distinctly out of them, Indian red, cleft in purple.

Choose, if you will, the steep high valleys of the Alps, with villages tucked everywhere in them and centuries of human history filling the chinks. There you will know no haunting void, no unbreathed air. There is not there, as in our West,

Something hidden. Go and find it.
Go and look behind the Ranges—
Something lost behind the Ranges.
Lost and waiting for you. Go!

So we go, we Americans who can, out of a nostalgic memory of our national youth, out of some hungering repetition of an old destiny. It led us into the Mountain Meadows massacre, into Death Valley; it led us to the green pastures of California, and made us to lie down beside Pacific waters.

But first you must cross the Great Basin, with its ample monotony. Sometimes a single species, like sagebrush, will dominate the scene as far as the eye can reach. Sage and amaranth and pigweeds join rank forces here with blite and orach, bugseed and burroweed, squat samphire around the alkaline lakes, seepweed where a little moisture fills the desert sumps, and winter-fat for the wild horses. Shriveled with thirst or bloated with bad water, the flora of the Mormon country is dominantly wind-pollinated. More wind than bees there. Fine as the alkaline dust, the smooth dry pollen grains sow the desert at large, and over an immense waste and wastage achieve, none the less, a fierce fertility. Petals there are seldom or never, since why allure the insect that will not come? Why catch the eye of the blind wind?

And wind distributes, too, the seeds or, bodily, the plants. In the east we know the various tumbleweeds as sere balls caught in the fences or capering in a dust storm down the road. With us they are dead beats. In the Great Basin they are vital things, that were in flower when I first went through, their raw green suffused with an angry purple. But in the heat of the late summer these modern annuals die to the root and, breaking loose, go scudding before the autumn winds, dropping seeds as they roll; they come like swift-mounted hordes out of the desert, getting their progeny upon conquered earth.

Out of this burning cup, to climb to Sierran passes still in spring, then to descend in a rush on smiling California, is to strike the minted gold of poppies. All that one ever heard in boast of California flowers is made fleetingly good, in the early summer of the coastal hills. There blue harvest bells are blooming in the already withered winter grass, and scarlet hummingbird-sage is bright beneath the gracious oaks. A bee-haunted flora is this, with insects roaring at the pouting and reluctant lip of the golden monkeyflower, and forcing their hunger in the gaping mouths of thistle sage. This is the Great Northern Flora carried out to the point of rapture.

And here we were to live, as the quail were free to nest or the foxes to find them a den. We were still just as doubtful of our address. But is there a human adventure with more light-hearted fun in it than to drive, just when the lights are coming into golden bloom in the deep blue oceanic dusk, into an unknown town by the sea and, falling in love with it, to promise yourself that you will find a home in it tomorrow?

Luck held, and made the promise good. By nine the next morning my wife was telling the house agent that this was where we lived now—in the rambling, wide-windowed house half-swallowed in semi-tropical shrubbery, with a view of the sea from under the wisteria on the veranda. The place, we learned, was called *Quien Sabe?* A life like ours must assuredly fit into any house with a name like that, so we settled in at once. I spent all that first day unpacking the boxes of books that, having been sent ahead by guesswork to this city, arrived with promising promptitude. Whistling, I arranged my scientific library shelves lining the room, and got my microscopes set up, and thought about what I was going to write here.

It was to be a book about plant life. I had written nearly a score of books on various other subjects, whereas all the time my soundest training, my principal field work and the dearest preoccupation of my leisure hours should surely have prepared me to discuss the topic of plants. A book about them was of all books the one to expect of me. And I kept putting it off. I dusted my tomes and shuffled my leaflets and set them in ordered rows on the shelf, and while I worked I whistled, because I was afraid.

I was afraid of all the things I didn't want my book to be, and of the various kinds of book that others might prefer that it were. I could hear the disparaging tones of scientists I admire, finding fault with it because it did not contain the essentials that are in any textbook on the subject, however limited. And here was I with every intention of leaving out just such matters. I could see the disappointment in the faces of many a prospective reader, learning that this was a book on—of all dull subjects!—botany. "I'd like to know something about plants," one of them had admitted to me, when I confided to him my project, "but I'll be blast if I'll learn any botany." And remembering certain courses I had taken, I had some sympathy with him. And with that other friend who hoped I'd write a book about herbs or herbalists, or the one who wanted me to write on trees, and the other who chimed in that what he would like was a book that made wild-flowers easy and fun to learn. I agreed with them all; I still do, and I made far-reaching plots and plans, as I set my study in order.

But here I had come to a new environment for stimulation, and already I was so overstimulated that I did not know where to begin. The western flora was more overwhelming than I had dreamed of it; it is, also, a mass of highly technical and difficult families such as even a well trained botanist would require years to master. California alone is so varied and rich as to be staggering; add to its native flora several thousand kinds of foreign ornamentals, belonging to families wholly unfamiliar. I had, I felt, in my teeth a nut that I was not sure I could crack.

"The first snow hoods like the sails of ships."

Abruptly I realized that I was tired, and no longer thinking reasonably about what lay before me. I threw down an armful of books and my dust

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cloth, and in the last sunlight I went for a walk.

Engaged with the ample and airy house, we had not, on this first day, gone farther. "There are grounds," the agent had said, and we had looked where he gestured at the slant lawn ringed with trees and shrubs, with that view of the sea beyond, under the arching bough of a live-oak. A few boulders stood massive on the sunny sward, and I had thought what good forts and castles they would make for the children, and what luck that a house so right for us had grounds as pleasant.

Now I went out at the other side of the house, across the patio and through a green door. I stepped into the silvery dusk of an olive grove; the path led through it, and past a small citrus orchard; here was fortune; and there was a hedge.

But the itch of exploration took me farther; I wriggled through a hole in the hedge, reckless of trespass. I stood in a circular garden where every flower was blue; it was dry and sun-smitten; fallen corallas, faded petals lay on the walks or drooped upon the stem before the weary bees. The place seemed to belong to a big ground bird with a lizard in his bill, who ran before me through an opening in a farther, higher hedge.

So I went his way, down a walk of abandoned topiary, into a little garden where every flower was red. Three steps down, and I stood in a third garden, long and stately and crowded with unfamiliar aliens. Bold of flowers, economical of foliage, muscular of stem, they spoke to me of their homeland — Australia. The roadrunner tempted me on; he fled across my path again and took me, past a great stone urn buried in unchecked greenery, into still another close. And this was planted to vegetation sultry of blossom, succulent of habit, bulbous—a South African garden. It was all weedy and dreamy and strange with an accent of far places, and I stooped dazedly to read one of the labels which, I realized, I had been seeing without heed all the way along. Like the others, it was weathered to no more than a cryptic anagram with half the letters missing.

I had lost the roadrunner now, but some other of the birds I did not yet know was calling with a tired insistence, in a light turning a little blue. I broke through a perfect Sleeping Beauty stand of harsh, bright weeds, and was in a region of boulders and immense columnar cacti of the Mexican highlands, jointed cacti of the Arizona deserts, writhing cacti of the Mexican lowlands, African crassulas, American yuccas, Hottentot figs, and crown-of-thorns bush. It was a fierce lunar sort of garden, bold with rocks, angry with spines, and abloom with gigantic pearly or flaming blossoms wherein the hummingbirds supped with an irritable, fairy roar of wings. Not all the breadth of the continent had prepared me for anything like this, and I stood lost in it, staring at the rigid architectural beauty of the cacti and at the mountains that reared behind them turning blue with the dusk.

There was a step, and an elderly Japanese came hurrying around a great rock with a watering pot in his hand. I approached in apology. I did not wish to trespass, I said, but I had rented *Quien Sabe* and carelessly mislaid myself from it. Whose garden was this?

The humor of a deep joke broke over his parchment countenance. "This *your* garden," he said, making me the bow suitable from the head gardener to the Director.

There seemed to be no longer any doubt about it. A man who becomes unwittingly lord of a great botanical garden famous in its days of splendor, when eight gardeners toiled to keep alive its many exotics, has been tagged by fate. True, by the standards of Yoneda, who alone is left to tend these gardens, they are in a sad state of repair. But fallen grandeur exactly suits me. And as I stood laughing there in the twilight, I had, about the plant book, the cheerful certainty of a man who can't help himself. All this, the range, the variety, the astonishment of the growing world, that had burst on me in a sort of huge joke, was what I had to talk about.

Somerset Maugham: An Appreciation

(*Continued from page* 4)

meant to him we know from "Don Fernando." His wanderings in the Pacific and the Malay States and China have been made vivid for us in stories and plays. And the Ashenden series of works comes out of his experiences in the Secret Service during the war. All of it non-literary life.

Thus, Maugham's work gives the impression of coming from an accomplished man of the world and not from a man in a library. People enjoy this, and I believe it to be one of the secrets of his success. There is a double advantage. He has been able to make close observation of many types of person, usually ignored or despised by the littérateur. And, as I say, readers like his manner. It is so entirely free of any trace of condescension, pretentiousness and superciliousness—the besetting sins of the highbrow. It is not merely a question of good manners, but of an attitude to life which is far superior to the limited interests and prejudices of intellectualist cliques. Maugham is a pretty good bridge-player and does not hesitate to reveal the fact in his writings. If he had such an accomplishment, the average littérateur would not dare reveal it—unless of course Maugham's example has now made it fashionable. In a minor way this matter of bridge-playing is characteristic of Maugham's whole attitude to life and art. There has been a long process of shedding everything he thought factitious and not quite true to himself. He refuses to conform to anybody's idea of what he ought to think and feel and do, and has labored with the utmost sincerity to discover what he really does think and feel, what sort of things he really wishes to do. If he finds that he prefers to go to the South Seas rather than cash in socially on his success in London, he will go to the South Seas, however much the prevailing opinion may be that he "ought" to prefer dining out with the upper classes. If he finds he prefers Voltaire's prose to the prose of the Bible, he will say so, whatever the prevailing fashion. Out of such essential integrity and truth to himself comes the genuine artist.

Maugham has achieved popular and artistic success with plays, novels, and short stories. This is quite exceptional —think of Shaw's novels and Flaubert's plays. "The Gentleman in the Parlor," "Don Fernando," and "The Summing Up" are fascinating books of travel, reminiscence, anecdote, and criticism. "Don Fernando" is one of the pleasantest books on Spain I know, and conveys a great deal of knowledge about Spanish life, literature, history, and art with such ease and lightness of touch that a superficial reader might fail to see how much and how accurately he is instructed. "The Summing Up" contains admirable remarks on the art of writing, the more persuasive since they are presented with exquisite measure and modesty. It is a wonderfully varied record of fine achievements. What variety there is in his novels from "Of Human Bondage" with its tragic irony to the cordially acid wit of "Cakes and Ale"; in the stories from "Rain" and "The Downfall of Edward Barnard" to "The Alien Corn" and "The Hairless Mexican"; in the plays from "Our Betters" and "The Constant Wife" to the poignant tragedy of "For Service Rendered." It is extraordinary that one man should write so much so well in such different genres.

I find pleasure in saluting Somerset Maugham, a master of the hard long art of writing, and I hope that more accomplished critics may be led to point out his achievements more adequately that I have been able to do.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kittredge's Shakespeare

AS YOU LIKE IT, JULIUS CAESAR, MACBETH, THE TEMPEST. Edited by George Lyman Kittredge. Boston: Ginn & Co. 1939. 85 cents a volume.

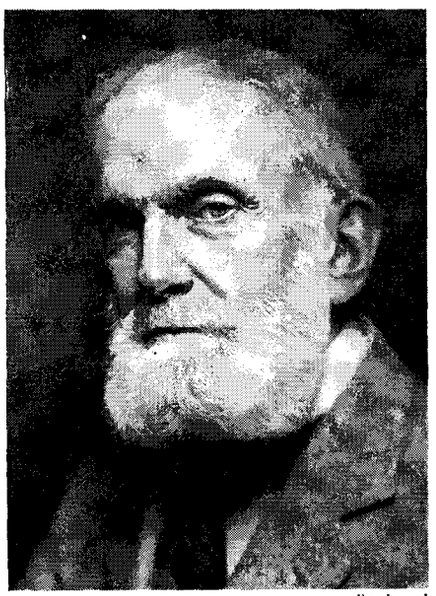
Reviewed by WILLIAM T. HASTINGS

THE promised hour is come at last. Thirty years ago the whisper ran about the Yard that "Kitty" was preparing an edition of the plays of Shakespeare. Fleshed on the daily evisceration of Dowden and Cowden-Clarke in that upper room in Harvard Hall, we hankered for forty volumes of gore. Our hopes were deferred and presently forgotten. Then, by what seemed an equivocation of the Fiend, came Kittredge's Shakespeare in 1936, a one-volume "Complete Works"; with an unanticipated and important new text and with brief factual prefaces to the individual plays, yet without that pungent commentary which for so long made English 2 the most celebrated of Harvard courses. But with the publication of these four attractive volumes the word of promise to our hope begins its fulfilment.

"Understandest thou what thou readest?" is a question too seldom put. Professor Kittredge, for whom elucidation of the text must precede any critical interpretation, has devoted a large part of a long lifetime to the meaning of Shakespeare,—to the great profit of generations of students and indirectly of scholarship at large. It was important that his special gifts of vigorous analysis, shrewd common sense, and immense and extraordinarily available learning should be more permanently recorded and more generally available than in notebooks and on the margins of "Old Rolfe." Knowledge and logic brought to bear upon meaning is Professor Kittredge's special gift. In these four volumes the notes are the thing.

The glosses are brief and simple, with only the necessary minimum of philological data; so admirably easy and idiomatic, in fact, as to conceal from the novice at times the exactness of the definition. One might wish, perhaps, that economy had not always been pressed so far: to the paraphrase of Brutus's "passion of some difference" ("strong and conflicting emotions") it would have been helpful to add a word about "passion" and a parallel to "difference" such as the "different greeting" of Tybalt's patience and choler. It is perhaps only nostalgia that makes one occasionally also regret the infrequency of the old flash of rapier over a disputed interpretation or reading, like "Tarquin's ravishing sides (slides, strides)." But there is in general copious illustration of the meanings, and a great body of reference to the sources of imagery and ideas; as on witchcraft and magic, on natural history, and on Elizabethan physiology, psychology, and cosmogony.

The introductions, expanded from the prefaces in the "Collected Works," deal succintly with the technical matters of date, text, source, and the modifications of the sources by the dramatist. The introduction to "The Tempest" also brings together the latest discoveries regarding the Virginia expeditions and Shakespeare's probable contact with the promoters. In "Macbeth" it is persuasively argued that the Weird Sisters are not witches but the Norns of Scandinavian mythology and that therefore "the tragedy of 'Macbeth' is inevitably fatalistic," though "to bring them within the range of the spectators' beliefs and experiences" the Sisters are given some of the attributes of witches. In "Julius Caesar" it is argued that the play is truly the tragedy of Caesar. In "As You Like It" there is excellent discourse on the clown and the fool in Elizabethan drama.



Bachrach

George Lyman Kittredge

As critic Professor Kittredge belongs not to the "romantic" or the "mystical" or the "historical" or the "bibliographical" or the "autobiographical" school but to the commonsensical. He practised a rational historical and bibliographical criticism before these schools were born. It is natural, therefore, that in his introductions and in his commentary he should not deal generally with or even refer directly to these special revelations, only taking a particular point up here and there (like Dover Wilson's theory of the revision of "As You Like It"). It is clear that he has defined his scope as critic of these plays rather strictly: to expound their meaning in detail and, beyond that, to correct certain misconceptions or to indicate briefly what he judges to be the correct approach to a general interpretation. It could be wished that he had felt free to comment more comprehensively upon them; thus for our benefit, perhaps, to bring his knowledge and acumen to bear upon the controversial interpretations of "Julius Caesar" and "Macbeth." Even in a school text, for example, one might venture to go beyond a suggestive observation ("Since he was writing a tragedy in 'Macbeth' and not a 'history,' he did not hesitate to take liberties"), and, including "Julius Caesar" in the discussion, argue how far the chronicle play principle and the chronicle play pattern persist, affecting technique in the tragedies and restricting the development of a tragic theme.

No doubt Professor Kittredge shares our boredom with "Shakespeare and the mob," "Shakespeare and ideal commonwealths," "Shakespeare and psychoanalysis," "Shakespeare's villains," "romances of reconciliation," "the deadly fourth act," and the other tritenesses of the dusty arena of controversy; but they are not trite to undergraduates, and some of them easily relate themselves to that insistent query, always confronting the scholar: What shall we think of Shakespeare's attitude toward his art (or, if you prefer, his craft)? We could ill spare the stimulating dicta sprinkled through the volumes: "Let us add one category to [Polonius's] varied *genres* and call 'As You Like It' pastoral-comical-actual"—"It is Cassius's nemesis, that, in winning Brutus, he has merely changed masters"—"The dramatic purpose of the quarrel [in Brutus's tent] is to mark the foreordained downfall of the conspirators"—"Banquo [in contrast with Macbeth] takes the incident of the witches rather lightly. . . . The difference is one of temperament." But we should be the richer for his exegesis of such texts in relation to the play as a whole or the general "idea" of Shakespeare.

A generation ago Professor Kittredge seemed to us beardless youths coëval with King Lear or Merlin. He is younger now, and we may cherish the expectation that with his good biting falchion he will yet cut through the fog of critical verbiage which smothers the remaining thirty-odd plays and present them to us with a similar luminous fidelity.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Great God "Noodeal"

STAR-SPANGLED VIRGIN. By Du-Bose Heyward. Farrar & Rinehart. 1939. 230 *pp.* $2.00.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THE title of this novel, which is more striking than appropriate, is explained by the fact that it is laid in the Virgin Islands, and begins shortly after Mr. Hoover had transferred them from Danish poverty to American bankruptcy. In it, Mr. Heyward appears to be attempting two things, to apply his sympathetic observation of Charleston Negroes to the far more primitive Negroes of the West Indies, and to show these primitive blacks suddenly brought into contact with civilized, and over-civilized, nations. In the first of these attempts he succeeds—or does so until the second interferes with it: his picture of Rhoda Berg, the big, earthy, genuine negress, of her shiftless, happy man Adam, and her brood of children (by no means all of them Adam's) is a warm and satisfying one. Rhoda one feels as the eternal mother, mothering (somewhat sharply) even Adam, finding him work and seeing that he does it, and bringing forth children with the joyful fertility of the tropical earth.

Du Bose Heyward

But halfway through the tone of the novel changes abruptly to farce. The New Deal reaches the islands, and the book becomes a laborious satire on the natives' understanding of the deity "Noodeal," who gives them food which they sell to buy finery, provides them with band concerts and Gilbert and Sullivan, and maintains them in idleness which they enliven by making illicit cocoanut wine. The mockery here is heavy-handed, and its aim is uncertain; Mr. Heyward appears to have intended to ridicule the Government and its lack of understanding of the true problems of its dependencies; but by the time the ridicule reaches the page, it strikes principally at the Negroes and their worship of Noodeal. And all this half of the story comes perilously near a Bourbon attitude astonishing in Mr. Heyward: it does not say, but it could be very easily taken to say, that the Negro was meant to cut cane, and is happy at that until you-all damyankees come and spoil him by giving him ideas of improved conditions.

The end of the book is achieved by another volte-face of the author's: from being the ostensible object of the satire, the New Deal appears as the god from the machine which allows Adam and Rhoda to take up a homestead. The book might seem better as a whole if it were less good in parts; the scene in which the government provides a parade to propagandize for legal marriage, and Rhoda counters with a parade of her own to popularize natural unions, is extravagantly funny, in a mode like Mr. Evelyn Waugh's of designedly heartless frivolity; but it does not fit with the splendid, savage Rhoda of the first half, the Rhoda who, until she was spoiled, belonged with Porgy and Bess.

Annals of Science

THE MARCH OF MIND: A Short History of Science. By F. Sherwood Taylor. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. 311 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by GEORGE RUSSELL HARRISON

IN this scientific era, when the invention of a new kind of glass is allotted a three-page spread in the news-picture magazines, and the future of civilization is considered by some persons to rest on whether scientists of democratic or dictator nations will be first to find the new alloy steel which may give temporary supremacy in the air, books on the history of science are of particular interest. Here is such a book; it was picked up for reviewing, only to be held for absorbed reading by one already familiar with the material under discussion.

Most of the available histories of science have had an academic tinge, which discouraged the layman who might wish for a clear, simple picture of the way men have learned to control Nature to their own ends. Now Mr. Taylor has written a concise, straightforward account of the development of science from the early practical astronomy and surveying of the Egyptians and the abstract and theoretical science of the Greeks, up to the present. The writing is distinguished for smoothness and clarity, and, without the usual devices for attracting the reader, holds interest by its swift pace. While details are not neglected, they are never allowed to obscure the general view of the broad development of science, and the result is a quick-moving, unified, and unpedantic picturization of the development of one aspect of the human mind.

The main emphasis of the book is on the general development of the scientific method, as exemplified in astronomy, chemistry, physics, biology, and medicine. There is a clear, though elementary, discussion of the conflict between scientific and Biblical teachings regarding the structure of nature. The author points out the effect of a stable political organization on the development of science, and shows how culture has depended on the freedom from want and worry which is one of the results of scientific development in a stable political system.

In a book where detail is subordinated to a general view of trends it is ungracious to point out inaccuracies; those few which forced themselves on my attention were uniformly unimportant, and surprisingly few in number for a work covering such a broad range of information. To avoid interrupting the smooth flow of the narrative, or cluttering up the pages with footnotes, almost no reading references are given, but a few books dealing with the histories of the various sciences are listed together at the end. The volume is well illustrated with fourteen plates and thirty-six text figures, but has an adequate index.

F. Sherwood Taylor

George Russell Harrison, on the staff of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is shortly to publish a volume on "Atoms in Action."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Writing for Publication

WRITING AND SELLING SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLES. By Helen M. Patterson. New York: Prentice-Hall. 1939. 578 *pp.* $3.65.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

THAT the present is the heyday of the feature article is a proposition already frequently advanced. It now receives confirmation, and a certain amount of annotation, through the appearance of a textbook telling student writers how to build reservoirs to catch the golden rain from the publishers. The profession is not one, it appears, that requires any particular amount or kind of talent.

> Many persons hesitate to market their manuscripts because they believe that successful writers possess occult powers they themselves do not have. But writing for publication is not mysterious; it must be reduced almost to a formula if one would write successfully . . . Anyone who can write English can write features if he will cultivate (1) the ability to be curious. . . .

"The ability to be curious." It is not, of course, the business of a textbook to investigate causes, and it is hardly the business of this textbook to offer remark on the rather terrifying spectacle of three or four thousand amateur reporters turned loose on the public yearly, each supplied with a good notebook, a candid camera, and a curiosity more insatiable than that of the elephant's child. "Everywhere one turns, everything one reads, everything one sees, contains possibilities for subjects about which to write." Then comes an ominous "Exercise"—"From a conversation find one idea that you could expand into a feature to sell."

The fact that a university professor familiar with the subject believes the literary market can stand all this production from newcomers without talent but with the ability to be curious implies rather more than the discovery of a useful working formula, however. It also implies an evolution in reading habits toward the acquisition of miscellaneous information; and from the details furnished, it would appear that most of the information wanted by readers is of a personal, and what used to be considered a private, nature.

But this is not all. Miss Patterson identifies seven main types of feature articles. Three of the seven—the Personal Experience Story, the Confession Article, and the Narrative Article—on the descriptions she gives of them clearly belong less to the conventional form of non-fiction than to an unconventional form of fiction. "A narrative article," quotha, "is one using devices of the short story—conversation, rapid action, thrilling adventure, and sustaining suspense." Where is the writer to obtain the record of actual conversations to support a Confession Article or a Personal Experience Story? Obviously, he must imagine them, along with some of the minor action (being careful to secure a signed release from the subject of the article).

The total result is really a new literary form, already recognized by at least one magazine, which boldly calls it "semi-fiction," defining it as a form in which the plot, dates, places, sometimes the names, are supplied by life and the details by the author. Meanwhile the form without the name is all around us. It is the entire stock in trade of the confession magazines, of the true detective and true adventure magazines, and of many of the movie magazines. If one may judge from the present volume it constitutes a very high percentage of newspaper feature articles.

Miss Patterson quotes statistics to show a great advance in the number of publications offering a market for such articles. She does not quote (it is not her business to) statistics showing a parallel decline in the number and importance of the magazines making fiction their staple. For that matter statistics are unnecessary; one has only to consider the list of new magazines that have been sensationally successful in recent years. *Time, Life, Look, Reader's Digest,* and *Fortune* carry no fiction at all in the accepted sense of the term; *Coronet* and the *New Yorker* a very limited amount, and only *Esquire* as much as twenty-five per cent. On the other hand every one of these magazines makes great use of the narrative article in one form or another.

With the usual reservations for generalities this would seem to point to considerable public dissatisfaction with the art of fiction writing as now practised. Perhaps this is because we are becoming a nation of keyhole peepers whose ideal of belles lettres is Walter Winchell's column. Perhaps it is because the suspension of disbelief has disappeared in a public that has discovered most stories are written by formula. Perhaps they will change back when they find out that narrative articles are written by formula, too. The only thing altogether clear at present is that by vote of the man who is paying the bills, the writer of "fact" is achieving a closer approach to life than the writer of fiction.

MORE PEOPLE
by Edgar Lee Masters

WITH the same skill in portraying personalities that won him world wide fame in "Spoon River Anthology," Mr. Masters presents a group of sixty poems about people, real and imaginary, each representing some significant aspect of American life. $2.50

BRIDGING THE YEARS
by Cale Young Rice

AN autobiography of unusual interest since it is both an account of one of America's foremost poets, whose life has been full of great activity and rare accomplishment, and a stimulating commentary on twentieth century literature. Illustrated. $3.00

MAGNA
by Zona Gale

HERE is a story which, like Miss Gale's most successful books, is laid in a small Middle Western town. Beautifully written in the author's best style and most finished form, "Magna" will serve as a lasting memory of her fine work. Second printing. $1.50

THE ROOT AND THE FLOWER
by Josephine Daskam Bacon

BUILT around a theme of the steady growth of women's position in American life, from 1870 to the present, Mrs. Bacon has written a truly remarkable novel, authentic in background and unusually appealing in the story it has to tell. $2.50

At All Booksellers

D. APPLETON-CENTURY COMPANY
35 West 32nd Street, New York

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Dublin Letter

BY DONAGH MacDONAGH

THE Abbey Experimental Theatre which was founded two years ago with the object of producing plays too new in technique or too remarkable in interpretation for the regular Abbey Company has just produced a new play by Jack B. Yeats, "Harlequin's Positions." Mr. Yeats has been known for many years as an artist whose subjects rarely drew him further than the fair-field or the market place, but within the last five years he has astounded artistic and literary Dublin by the development of a painting technique which has much in common with Dufy and the surrealists, by his producing of three highly original and interesting novels, and now by his highly colored and rather Cocteauesque interpretation of life in an Irish country town. There is a great deal of fantastic, original and often hilarious talk but what all the talk is about no one, least of all the characters, knows. Within its own framework however "Harlequin's Positions" is fine entertainment, it is only when one examines it from the coldly logical standpoint of a rainy street that the whole thing begins to seem like a great gob of unedited subconscious torn out whole and living and left to ramble about the stage.

The last work of the other great Yeats brother appeared a short time ago. "Last Poems and Two Plays" contains the verse written between the appearance of "New Poems" last year and the poet's death, and two plays one new and one which has already been produced. The new play is called "The Death of Cuchulain" and is a sequel or epilogue to "On Baile's Strand" which was produced at the Abbey Festival last year. Yeats was so impressed by that production and by the acting of Liam Redmond, a young Abbey actor, in the role of Cuchulain that he determined to take the story of the hero one stage further.

The second play in the book is "Purgatory." This was produced for the first time at the Abbey Festival last summer and was on that occasion the cause of quite an amount of controversy.

Purgatory is also the theme of Austin Clarke's new verse play "Sister Eucharia" which was recently published by the Orwell Press here and has just been produced by the Gate Theatre. "Sister Eucharia" seems to me one of the most successful verse plays of recent years. The verse is graceful and deft and the stagecraft sure. The action takes place in a convent where the whole community is worried by the actions of a young nun, Sister Eucharia, who will not leave the chapel to eat or sleep; the other nuns are divided as to whether she is a saint or merely a notoriety-seeking hysteric, the younger nuns declaring that she must be left alone while the older ones insist that discipline be maintained. Only when she collapses and they discover chains bound around her arms at the same time that the convent bell begins miraculously to ring are they convinced that she is a saint and that her love for the suffering souls in Purgatory is a real and living thing. This is a charming little play in which poetry, fantasy, and reality are skilfully blended.

Yeats's successor in title as the doyen of Irish letters has just received the degree of Doctor in Letters, *Honoris Causa* from Dublin University. Dr. Starkie, his new title, may mean little to the majority of readers, but as Seumas O'Sullivan he is well-known as the author of many volumes of verse and as editor of the remarkably long-lived *Dublin Magazine*. *The Dublin Magazine* was founded sixteen or seventeen years ago and is now the sole survivor of numerous periodicals which have sprung up and withered away since. It is perhaps the ideal quarterly for this country, not brilliant enough to be brought under ban nor quite stodgy enough to die of inanition. It has published all the most respectable Irish writers from time to time, and occasionally the not quite so respectable ones, and it has plodded away quietly through the years, avoiding the perils of the libel laws and the heady success which brought many of its contemporaries into an early grave.

The *Irish Statesman*, Æ's paper, came to its tragic death through the intricacies of the ridiculous law of libel, and it left a gap which has never since been filled. In the last few months, however, there has been much talk of reviving the *Statesman* though no definite scheme has yet been made public. A new literary paper is vitally necessary in Dublin; since the demise of the last one, *Ireland Today*, there is no non-sectarian paper where literary or political matters can be discussed. It is to be hoped that there is enough money left in the country to finance such a paper.

Also published this month is "Selected Poems," by Lyle Donaghy which has been produced by the Tower Booklets and contains two or three really beautifully poems among much mediocre work. Mr. Donaghy is a most uneven poet who in the midst of a dull collection can suddenly achieve poems of startling beauty.

On the grounds that it might be "subversive of public morality" and would tend to engender hatred among nations, Ireland's genial film censor James Montgomery (his Irish title, translated into English is "Scrutator of Shadows") has banned the American film, Confessions of a Nazi Spy. Mr. Montgomery in spite of, or perhaps because of, his position is one of the wittiest men in Dublin. Author of most of the good wisecracks of the past forty years (it was he who said that the trees along the Dodder were more sinned against than sinning), he has been the friend of every writer in Ireland since he came to the use of reason. Despite the fact that he has been sitting in the dark looking at films for the past seventeen years he still retains a fresh and lively interest in them; he says, as regards his views on film morality, that he is between the Devil and the Holy See.

From the Dublin point of view there have been two literary events of the last few months, the appearance of "Finnegans Wake" and of "At Swim Two Birds." In a sense the two books are complementary, the night and day life of the city, the youth and age of Dublin writers, the influence and the influenced. People here are fond of repeating the story of Joyce saying to Yeats "We have met too late for you to be influenced by me" but in the case of Joyce and Flann O'Brien it would be more likely to be "It is well we have met in time for you to be influenced by me," and it is perhaps indicative of the type of writer which Dublin has produced in O'Brien that Joyce sent his copy of "At Swim Two Birds" to have it autographed by the author, sending in exchange an autographed copy of "Finnegans Wake." They have much in common these two, not only the Dublin streets and pubs but the same extravagant sense of humor, the same scholarship, the same preoccupation with the past.

The Abbey Theatre announces the production of three new plays within the next two months—Illumination, by T. C. Murray, Fohnam the Sculptor, a verse play by Daniel Corkery, and Give Him a House, by George Shiels. Both T. C. Murray and George Shiels are well-known to American audiences since many of their plays are in the Abbey touring repertiore. Daniel Corkery is professor of English Literature in Cork University; Sean O'Faolain and Frank O'Connor sat under him there for lectures and were for a time his disciples; after a time however the lights of the Big City drew them away from God's Own Town and they started to make a name for themselves.

Within the next few weeks will be published by the Directors of the Abbey the first issue of *The Arrow*. Many years ago the Abbey brought out, under the direction of Lady Gregory and W. B. Yeats, a publication with this title which soon lapsed in the traditional manner. The first issue of the revived paper will be a Yeats Commemorative Number with articles and drawings by the following: John Masefield, Edmund Dulac, Sir William Rothenstein, W. J. Turner, Oliver St. John Gogarty, Austin Clarke, Dr. Richard Hayes, Lennox Robinson and F. R. Higgins, J. B. Yeats, Sean O'Sullivan, Sir Max Beerbohm, Eamonn Dooley, and others.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Major Work on the Indians

PUEBLO INDIAN RELIGION. By Elsie Clews Parsons. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1939. 2 *vols.,* 1,275 *pp., with index.* $7.

Reviewed by OLIVER LA FARGE

THE normal routine of science is the endless accumulation and interpretation of data, item by item, year by year, until a student approaching a given subject for the first time is appalled by the mass to be digested. The part of the gatherer, the field worker, is fundamental. As he collects his material, and even more later, when he prepares it for publication, he makes comparisons and draws some conclusions extending beyond the particular items which he himself has added to the pile. A fact in itself is merely a fact; science begins when two facts are considered in the light of each other.

In this way, even the briefest paper is likely also to be a contribution to a vague process of summarization, which in a live field never gains on the incoming material. In so large and complicated a matter as the religion, or interrelated religions, of the Pueblo tribes of Arizona and New Mexico, inseparable in turn from their context of social structure and economy, the time arrives when even a relatively minor paper is almost incomprehensible to ethnologists who have not read the vast library on the subject.

At this stage of super-saturation the summarizer is needed for a delicate and difficult task. Erudition is not sufficient; the existing body of knowledge must be organized, a confused mass of items made to display its pattern, and interpretation is inevitable. The demand upon the summarizer is second only to that upon the author of popular science—which is so blithely tackled by the incompetent. Self-discipline, fairmindedness, perspective, and a wide, comparative background are necessary to produce a compendium which will really replace the labor of reading everything published on the subject between 1870 and 1939. Such a successful accomplishment as Dr. Parsons's "Pueblo Indian Religion," is a monumental achievement.

Such books are likely to be compiled by armchair scientists who, for lack of ever having seen the living natives of whom they write, all too often produce works which fill the field man with bitter amusement. Dr. Parsons brings to her work years of personal contact with the Pueblo people from Hopi to Taos, and extensive experience in neighboring fields.

The book is not only a convenience for all present students, but by placing in order what has been gathered to date, clarifies the present status of research, thus serving as a guide to field workers. The Pueblos, easy of access, conservative, picturesque, have been studied by innumerable scientists. Here the findings are brought together, and not the least important result is the appendix of three significant pages, Research Desirable in Pueblo Culture. It is interesting, occasionally startling, to see some of the points that have never been covered.

These two volumes will not be read by the ordinary man, yet the fact of their existence is important to him. The endless publications of raw, technical research seem hopelessly unconnected with daily intellectual life, so that it is hard to see at times that the continuation of such studies serves anything beyond mere accumulation. The reasoned summary produces its own, direct applications. In this case, as long as our Indian policy remains as intelligent as it has recently become, the knowledge here made accessible will affect the administration of many tribes. But the value goes beyond this: details, facts, may remain the property only of specialists, but ideas pass from mind to mind. A major work such as this is one step in the process by which matters unknown to ourselves evolve into concepts and understandings that seep, constantly enriching, into the storehouse of our thought.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 281)

JOHNSON:
"VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES"

The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Caesarean power.
The baffled prince . . . . . .
Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,—
His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.

An Analysis of Russia

RUSSIA: Without Illusions. By Pat Sloan. New York: Modern Age Books, Inc. 1939. 243 *pp., with index.* 75 *cents.*

Reviewed by REBECCA JANNEY TIMBRES

PAT SLOAN, a Cambridge First in economics, and later assistant lecturer in economics at the University College at Bangor, England, lived nearly seven years in the Soviet Union between 1931 and 1937, and has retained a remarkably dispassionate and objective attitude toward his experiences. His analyses of the history and activities of the Soviet regime from 1917 to the present time, however, are frank refutations of interpretations made by recent anti-Soviet writers, and it would be well for any student of present-day Russia who happens to have a Gide and a Lyons on his book-shelf, to slip this volume in between, in order to maintain mental balance in judgment and perspective.

Mr. Sloan did not intend to write about his experience in Russia, but, as he says in the first chapter of "Russia without Illusions":

> . . . since my return to England the flood of books of the "I-have-lived-in-Russia" type has increased. . . . And among these books a particular tendency has become noticeable—that of the "disillusioned Communist" who, in the late 1920's or early '30's, went to the U.S.S.R. to work, buoyed up by enthusiasm for the Five-Year Plan, and professes, as a result of experiences at that time, to have been bitterly disillusioned. And it is just because I, too, went to the U.S.S.R. at the same time, not as a communist but as an economist, without any illusions whatever as to what I should find in Russia, that I now write this

IMMORAL OR IMMORTAL?

The literary and critical world has been quick to deplore the recent banning of the French film, "Harvest", by the New York censors. Jean Giono's sensitive and realistic novel is being widely acclaimed as another masterpiece from one of France's major pens. The film—a faithful adaptation—is perhaps its own best defense, as these reviews suggest:—

". . . a masterpiece . . . an enduring work of art."
—N. Y. TIMES

". . . an exceptional picture . . . has a remarkable spiritual depth of feeling . . ."
—NATIONAL BOARD OF REV.

"...simple and inspiring story..."
—HARRY HANSEN

"A ban that must be rescinded . . . the intelligent movie-going public cannot afford to miss a picture of such elemental and profound truth . . ."
—N. Y. POST

". . . without doubt one of the few films that can be classed as art . . ."
—THE NATION

Read the book on which the picture is based.

HARVEST
The novel by JEAN GIONO
THE VIKING PRESS — $2.50

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book about my experiences and the conclusions to which these experiences have led me.

The experiences referred to by the author include those of teacher, "proletarian tourist," observer of organization and methods of large-scale industries and agricultural collectives, worker, trade union organizer, patient in a Soviet hospital, and general participant of life as lived by the masses.

The literary style is uneven, and there are abrupt transitions from one subject to another; but the reader is gripped by the evident sincerity of the author and the vividness of the pictures portrayed. The chapter entitled "Is This Socialism?" gives an analysis of the various forms of socialism as they have expanded from 1917 on in the Soviet Union; and the final sixty pages of the book present the most lucid interpretations of the trials and purges, the one-party rule, the histories of the discredited politicians, and the reactions of "the disillusioned" that I have read.

A Mystery Expert Picks
Death Has a Past
By ANITA BOUTELL
"Absorbing. Events preceding 'acts of violence' compose tale of surpassing suspense."— *Saturday Review of Literature*, "*The Criminal Record*"
$2. PUTNAM'S

Verdict: TOPS
says Judge Lynch of
DEATH PAYS A DIVIDEND
John Rhode's
new Dr. Priestley mystery
First class example of how *one* murder in expert hands can furnish more bafflement and zest than horrendous hecatombs. Verdict: Tops.
$2.00—DODD MEAD, NEW YORK

A Narrative Poem of Anne Hutchinson

SCARLET ANNE. By Theda Kenyon. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1939. 312 pp. $2.

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER LA FARGE

THERE is so much good writing, good characterization, and dramatic material in this historical narrative poem, that it seems hard to quarrel with it, particularly as the technique of the medium chosen presented such difficulties. The poem so nearly succeeds as a whole, that one resents that it does not quite do so. I do not know how long Miss Kenyon took in digesting her material or in writing her book: I am left with the sense that it was not long enough.

However, here is the moving story of the remarkable Anne Hutchinson, who, coming to Massachusetts with her husband in 1634, fought bravely and well for liberty of worship, through Admonition, Excommunication, and Exile, until her tragic death in New York in 1643. The story is mostly set against the clearly drawn background of the Bay Colony in the days of Cotton and Winthrop, of Wheelright and Vane, of Symmes and Wilson: the forces of bigotry in days of poverty, anxiety, and fear. The later Aquidneck and New York episodes are more sketchily given. Throughout, the major theme dominates, as it should: Anne Hutchinson's consecrated devotion to the tenets of her belief, and the development of her life according to the pattern of that devotion. Timely material, reminding us in many excellent passages of the liberty our forefathers fought, suffered, and died to maintain.

Some of the shorter lyrics are admirable, such as the poem beginning:

> The wind is running through the night
> On silver sandals . . .

and the interpolated description of Belshazzar's Feast. Here and there are sharp descriptive passages, such as that of Edward Hutchinson who "shut The door and moved with sudden respect for echoes." Much of the blank verse is rapid and skillful, yet has a disturbing tendency to vary its rhythm arbitrarily and briefly. As few of the poems exceed a hundred lines and many of these are broken by shorter lyrics, the necessity for such variations within a unit is not evident. But a greater fault is the speed with which the author introduces and dismisses countless incidents, leaving the reader behind and somewhat bewildered. Many of these passages could have been omitted if they could not have been lengthened, and the space added to those scenes that, now too breathlessly, tell the important phases of the story. As an example, I cite the poem on William Kieft near the end of the book. A longer, more thorough digestion of the poetic material might have obviated such faults, giving the whole book that fused intensity of poetry and story which now appears in it only at intervals. In spite of this I have enjoyed reading it.

Christopher La Farge is the author of the novel in verse, "Each to the Other."

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DANGER ROAD *Mark Saxton* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2)	Husky son of missing U.S. under-cover agent fights Nazi operatives and dusky henchman to hurricane finish.	New England countryside resounds to roar of high-powered cars, thud of blows, and sighs of cave-man love.	Palpitating
THE BLIND SIDE *Patricia Wentworth* (Lippincott: $2)	Black-hearted Lothario shot in London apt. house inhabited by relatives with righteous grudges. Insp. Lamb takes the case.	Solution handed to police on platter after everybody in sight suspected—but answer is not easily guessed.	Good
MURDER IN THE HOUSE WITH THE BLUE EYES *J. N. Darby* (Bobbs-Merrill: $2)	Stabbing, poisoning, and submersion jar Yuletide calm of Southern town. Girl narrator, local sheriff, and practically speechless detective cooperate.	Pleasantly talkative yarn with authentic small-town color and abundant action — but solution is pretty much agin the rules.	Adequate
DEATH OVER HER SHOULDER *Dorothy Cole Mead* (Scribners: $2.)	Dejected maiden arrives to visit friend in Malaya, finds her murdered and bungalow deserted. Friends arrive to provide number of suspects. Malay detective solves triple murder.	Good background, tense atmosphere, ready-made hero, sophisticated friends, and cross-currents of emotion help make a pretty tangle. Pretty maiden all forlorn center of turmoil.	Good

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Literature in the American Colonies

STUDIES IN LITERARY TYPES IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AMERICA (1607-1710). *By Josephine K. Piercy. New Haven: Yale University Press (Yale Studies in English, Vol. XCI).* 1939. 352 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by KENNETH B. MURDOCK

ONLY the most reverently superstitious still cling to the belief that the American colonists knew and cared nothing about literature, but an analytical study showing what literary conventions they preferred and what earlier works they took as models might still shed light on an important aspect of our cultural history. Miss Piercy's book is designed as such a study, but unfortunately its conclusions rarely go beyond what is obvious to any one who has read much of the literature she discusses or examined the standard accounts of it. It is not necessary to read her pages to learn that the colonists' writing was neither "crude in expression nor limited in subject," that it was not always dominated by "the religious note," and that certain literary types were commoner than others. Her statement that "our early literature" was "touched by the personal interpretations which lifted it, however naïvely, into 'the literature of power'," and "had a literary consciousness manifest in its active interest in the world of men and of God, and in its recognition of certain established literary forms," seems to mean no more than that the colonists wrote about as any reasonably well-educated and intelligent men, conversant with the rudiments of a literary tradition, are always pretty sure to write. More striking, but unfortunately less well supported by the evidence, is the theory that we inherit from the seventeenth-century American writers a love of analysis, a didactic impulse, classical rhetoric, and a liking for short prose pieces, especially the essay. If we actually have such an inheritance, it is easier and probably more reasonable to trace it to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English and foreign sources rather than to seventeenth-century native ones.

Miss Piercy has read widely in colonial literature, and, especially in her sections on historical writing and prefaces, has collected useful raw material for criticism and interpretation. But she leaves it raw material. Her critical comments are usually elementary, and her generalizations too often vague. The casual reader will not be attracted by her style; the more patient scholar will find that she offers little not within his reach before. He will find her treatment of the English background of early American literature so superficial as to be virtually useless; he will marvel at the easy generalizations she makes on seventeenth-century prose style, on the form of the sermon, and on rhetoric, apparently without much thorough study of the most important scholarly work, past and present, which has been done on each.

Kenneth B. Murdock, professor of English at Harvard, is the author of "The Sun at Noon" and "Incucan Mather."

A Capitalist Family

THE HOUSE OF MITSUI. By Oland D. Russell. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. 328 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by T. A. BISSON

SOME three hundred years ago, when the *Mayflower* settlers were still living in Massachusetts, a Japanese family dropped its patrician rank and entered the business of *saké* brewing. The business prospered; other lines were added, notably money-lending and general merchandising. The family multiplied, and soon had six main branches stemming from the sons of one Hachirobei Mitsui. For over two hundred years, under the Tokugawa Shogunate, the business enterprises of the Mitsui house gradually expanded. During the Restoration of 1868 the Mitsuis financed the Imperial cause, nearly bankrupting themselves in the process. They had placed their bets on the right horse, however, and as Japan mushroomed into modernization, the Mitsui corporate structure penetrated into all fields of banking, industry, and trade.

This family saga is told here with a wealth of concrete material, both contemporary and historical. In May, 1938 the author met five of the present eleven Mitsui family heads at a formal tea in one of their villas. Their interests have been safeguarded by rigid adherence to a set of rules early laid down in a family constitution, which has been modified as conditions have changed. Many of the Mitsui family heads have participated actively in the management of their enterprises, although a famous line of "managing directors" have taken a more leading role since the Restoration. Baron Dan (assassinated in 1932) and Seihin Ikeda (ex-Finance Minister) have been the most prominent of the recent managers of *Mitsui Gomei Kaisha,* the parent holding company.

This is by no means a muck-raking biography; its subjects are almost uniformly presented in a favorable light. Material drawn from exposés of Mitsui policy—its ruthless competitive practices, various scandals (as in the Toyo Rayon case), and labor conditions—are sparingly introduced. To the discerning reader, however, these sections will throw a light on much that is left unsaid. On the whole, the volume presents an illuminating picture of the rise of capitalism in Japan, as viewed from the evolution of its premier business family.

Saturday Reviewers

Disraeli

JUDGE LYNCH

[Reprinted from Publishers' Weekly]

He has judged mystery books for the *Saturday Review's* "Criminal Record" for six years in which time he has commented upon 1,500 detective and mystery novels. We can give you a great many clues to the identity of this chancellor of the whodunits. You may be able to guess his name right off from that of his row-boat, the Arachne, in which he rows with muffled oars on the Shrewsbury River. Or, if you ever received a letter signed "Colonial Beauregard Breckenridge Yassuh, of Burntover, Sherman Furnace, Ga.," then you have your man.

He was a friend of S. S. Van Dine, the creator of Philo Vance. But Lynch, a man of fine scruples for all of his delight in gory cadavers, never reviewed his friend's books.

Clarence Boutell, writing in the *Publisher's Weekly* about mystery book reviewing, said of Judge Lynch's work: "I would back 'The Criminal Record' against any English column I have ever run across, and for brevity and clarity, it has the honors over practically every established American police blotter." Judge Lynch's terse verdicts are small masterpieces of decisive reviewing—"Disappointing," "Top drawer," "Stuffy," "Tropical," "Super de luxe," and "Somniferous."

At his home, a comfortable tree-shadowed old house in New Jersey, he grows—this is the Nero Wolfe strain in him—hundreds of gladioli, delphinium, and Japanese beetles.

For some years the Judge and his family had trouble keeping colored maids until, still unconscious of the cause, he abandoned a habit of his. Formerly, as he read along in mysteries, he made notations about the crimes on small slips of paper which he left lying about. One morning he was surprised himself to find a memo reading: "The torso is in the attic."

Judge Lynch is married and has one son, who refuses to touch a mystery book. Some day the Judge will write a mystery himself. Anyway, he has a title for it. So far as he is concerned, it is only a title; but it comes pretty close to representing his personal philosophy—"One More Laugh Before We Die."

—o—

You'll save money on your whodunit reading by subscribing to the S.R.L. *($4 a year).*

THE SATURDAY REVIEW of LITERATURE
420 Madison Avenue New York City

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New Books

Belles Lettres

RELIGIOUS TRENDS IN ENGLISH POETRY: Volume I: 1700-1740. *By Hoxie Neale Fairchild. Columbia University Press.* 1939. 612 *pp.* $5.

The first volume of Professor Fairchild's projected study of the religious element in English poetry from the eighteenth century to the twentieth is as invaluable a reference work as it is a formidable labor of research. He has examined his lugubrious material with unflagging patience and care. No scribbler of verses is too abject for his consideration; frequently, indeed, the scribblers receive more attention than the veritable poets, since the various religious attitudes, uncolored by conscious art, may be more clearly discernible in their effusions. A versifier like Henry Carey may very well prove a better clinical example than a Pope or Swift. Professor Fairchild is but slightly interested in the criticism of poetry as such; his concern is with ideas, political, social, and theological. His thesis is the conflict of Tory with Whig, of High Church with Low, of orthodox with deist, the controversies that troubled the Church of England in the reign of Anne, and that, in one form or another, have continued to trouble it down to our time.

The book suffers somewhat from an arbitrary adherence to the starting-date, 1700. True, an historian has to start somewhere, and 1700 is, roughly, the beginning of a period; but a summary of the religious trends of the sixteenth century would have provided the casual reader with a useful background, and surely some slight consideration of the great Jacobite and Caroline divine poets would have done much to direct such a reader's approach to Professor Fairchild's Chamber of Horrors. *Sed praeterita ne cures*—this work, for the occasional reader as well as for the student, for the theologian as well as for the amateur of bad verse, is a treasure-mine.

D. F.

THE PERSONAL HERESY: A Controversy. By E. M. W. Tillyard and C. S. Lewis. Oxford University Press. 1939. 150 *pp. and notes.* $2.

These six essays are not, as the authors point out in their preface, a prearranged *"débat, estrif,* or *disputatio."* In 1934 Professor Lewis, Fellow of Magdalen (Oxon.), published a brilliant attack upon what he called the Personal Heresy—the theory that creative writing, especially poetry, is an expression of personality and that our purpose in reading it is to become acquainted with the author. This essay was answered a year later by Professor Tillyard, Fellow of Jesus (Cantab.). Professor Lewis's rejoinder followed; and the authors wisely decided to permit the publication of their Controversy.

In the course of his exposure of the Personal Heresy Professor Lewis gives us some extraordinarily sensitive criticism, not only of individual poems but also of the various schools of literary esthetic. His writing is both erudite and witty; its only fault is an occasional tendency to indulge a kind of sentimental rhetoric: "The poet is my fellow creature—a traveller between birth and death—one of *us."* Professor Tillyard is less engaging but somehow more convincing. It becomes clear, after the first exchange, that upon nearly all but the fundamental question the controversialists are really in accord. Consequently, much of the discussion on both sides is sheer exuberance; but every page is so crammed with fine things that only the most bilious of referees could wish to keep the contestants in order.

This year's College Board Examination in English required the candidates to show how a novelist reveals his own personality in his work. It is a pity that the Board of Examiners could not have pondered Professor Lewis's opening essay before they decided to confirm the Personal Heresy in the dazed minds of so many children!

D. F.

Fiction

SO STANDS THE ROCK. By Anne Miller Downes. Stokes. 1939. 341 *pp.* $2.50.

There is no perceptible reason why this should be called "a novel of Vermont." The state enters the book only as a geographical expression and in a few tentative "durns" from one of the older inhabitants, who dies off in time to leave the field clear for the emotional difficulties of his daughter, Jessie. She falls in love with a half-Irish lad of poetic temperament, amid a rafale of such phrases as "The sunlight in his hair! The eagerness in his eyes!" Shortly after they marry in haste, and Jessie spends the rest of her own and the reader's leisure in repenting that her husband has not the same sterling money-making character as herself. It seems he was cut out to be a writer; he is a flop as farmer, cabinet-maker, and husband. Women run after him, too, especially one Nell Blake, who appears in a rather startling incident:

> Like the flashing beauty of a scarlet tanager flitting through the tree branches, the sight of her pale gold hair was always a bit disconcerting. An hour later, in the back room, she gave him all the whisky he wanted to drink in return for kisses, but when her arms were fastening themselves too insistently about his neck, he pushed her off with a mocking laugh and made his way home. The next morning Jessie found him in a deep stupor.

The quotation, with its mixed simile, tautology, and remoteness from life, is typical of the whole volume, which is a rather innocuous example of what used to be called the "summer novel."

F. P.

THE OWNLEY INN. By Joseph and Freeman Lincoln. Coward-McCann. 1939. 311 *pp.* $2.50.

A mystery built up entirely out of New England materials, this mechanical but agreeable story is a rainbow of local color. A priceless book is stolen: it is an early edition of the New England primer; the thief is shipwrecked: it is our own private hurricane that casts him up on an island off Cape Cod; when the thief is murdered, an amateur solves the mystery. This Father Brown is a self-conscious New England "character."

Unfortunately, in spite of pleasant, straightforward writing, the book takes its tone less from the hurricane than from the primer; the mystery and the accompanying romance are not so much stormy as abecedarian.

K. S.

AUTHORS IN PARADISE. By Alan Griffiths. Stokes. 1939. 336 *pp.* $2.50.

Albert Pawsey, an unsuccessful cockney medium, suddenly gets through to Dean Swift, who dictates to him "The Return of Gulliver." Since there is no more copyright in heaven, Albert steals the MSS and poses as its author. Called upon to prove himself in a second book, Albert knocks them cold with a Great War drama dictated by Shakespeare. The result is a satire which squeezes the pips queaks of literary life in England, distilling a few wry drops.

When Mr. Griffiths lets you into Albert's small, outrageous, hopeful, ignorant baffled head—"the capital of a none too lovely column"—he sometimes recalls the early H. G. Wells. But when he parodies book reviews, leading articles, and literary gabble in general, his satire is still more thin and dusty than his originals, and just as melancholy reading. If Albert's authors are in Paradise, his critics and public are in a limbo of terrifying shadowiness.

K. S.

BETWEEN THE DEVIL. By Murrell Edmunds. Dutton. 1939. 288 *pp.* $2.50.

If a young minister comes to a Virginia mill town bent upon his single-minded mission of saving souls, and if he finds that there are bodies and lives to be saved first, what shall he do then? This, precisely, is the problem Mr. Edmunds puts, and answers at length in a thorough documentary

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

study. We call it that rather than a novel, for its values are purely social and explanatory. As a novel it would have to be criticized for its writing, which is flat and undistinguished by any sort of literary personality, and for its creaking mechanical structure. But these things matter very little when we choose to regard the story as a straight report of one battle in labor's long war for recognition. The battle extends from the mill to every inhabitant in the town, for mill-owner, mayor, and police, with organized vice as a silent partner, are in league against the threat of organized labor, in this instance the C.I.O. Organizers are beaten, strike-breaking thugs imported, the townspeople terrorized. In the midst of this, the young Reverend Burton is torn between his traditional preoccupation with spiritual matters and the strong promptings of his sense of Christian duty. His decision and his fate add final drama to the town's crisis. Mr. Edmunds, himself a Virginian, knows the people, the terrain, the conditions, with an exactness that cannot be doubted. His account of them is well worth reading.

N. L. R.

Philosophy

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLATO. By Raphael Demos. Scribners. 1939. 406 *pp., with index.* $3.

The nimble genius of A. N. Whitehead once conceived the expression that the whole history of Western philosophy was but a series of footnotes to Plato. His colleague, Professor Demos, agreed, but suggested that Plato should have written the footnotes himself. In this book he has undertaken that task for the late Plato and has done a magnificent and admirable job—except that now someone needs to write the footnotes to "The Philosophy of Plato" by Raphael Demos. In other words, this book, which attempts to systematize what inherently defies systematization, can serve only the professional philosopher already familiar with metaphysical jargon and cognizant of those other footnotes supplied by Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Kant, Shorey, Dewey, Whitehead, Woodbridge, and the rest. For the lay reader the long disquisitions on the receptacle, being, selfhood, otherness, relatedness, appearance, God, the soul, the Good, and other "bloodless categories" may somewhat de-Platonize the great Academician.

Professor Demos is not, of course, unaware of the difficulties which inevitably confront the interpreter of Plato. His thorough knowledge of the dialogues and his profound love for his subject have combined to help him produce a work of the highest competence from the technical point of view. Even here, however, the uncertainties and ambiguities of almost every sentence, discounting the language barrier, encourage a variety of interpretations of which the author's is only one. His assertion that Plato was, if not consistent, at least consistently inconsistent, is one of those facile phrases which sparkle in their immediacy but which, upon sober reflection, fail to mean anything at all.

In sum, professional philosophers should read and study this book, but should also know Plato exceedingly well before attempting it. The lay reader, if he wants to retain his faith in Plato as the avatar of the nobility of Greek civilization, had better not indulge himself in the hard labor of going through it. After all, and in spite of the "essential notions" which the author has so industriously enumerated, the meaning of Plato remains as elusive as the identity of the third murderer in Macbeth. And no one but a specialist would read a book about that.

R. B.

Religion

THE SUM OF THINGS. By Sir Francis Younghusband. Dutton. 1939. 150 *pp., with index.* $1.90.

In this book a veteran of the British Foreign Service, who retired to devote his life to religion, sums things up and finds the meaning of life in joy. Lest someone accuse him of hedonism he hastens to assert that the highest joy dwells in mystical experience where the spirit communes with the one, uses cloying prose to describe the ineffable and tell the "untellable," consoles himself that all of us, "even the Russians," have more happiness than misery, disdains the parochialism of our universe, pronounces his faith in the existence of life—a higher, better, and happier life—on other planets of other stars, worships a World-Leader on some distant star who represents to all the children of the cosmos what the Prime Minister does to the English (quite without irony), convinces himself that science supports his illusions, and finally, of course, believes in God who helps us "go from joy to joy till the joy of all joys is ours." For mystics this is holy stuff; for the rest of us, fluff and nonsense.

R. B.

Travel

I WENT TO THE SOVIET ARCTIC. By Ruth Bruber. Simon & Schuster. 1939. 333 *pp.* $3.

Miss Gruber went to the Soviet Arctic to study the problems facing women under fascism, communism, and democracy. She entered the country with an open mind, no set beliefs, a working knowledge of Russian, and an easy familiarity with German. Added to these were an unusual awareness and a sensitive response to all that went on about her. Despite the wealth of material which she gathered and facts which are astonishing to those of us not so well read or experienced, the book could easily have been dull in less accomplished hands. The writer in this case has the gift of recreating the scenes and atmosphere in which she lived and instead of dry statistics, she makes her points just as tellingly through the medium of personal interviews and well reported conversations.

Her luck in being at the right place at the right time hinged largely on her own eagerness and interest in her subject. Everyone seemed glad to help her and make her task easy and enjoyable. She spent months at Igara, within the Arctic circle studying the activities there and becoming acquainted with the people. From Igara she boarded the icebreaker Anadyr on its historic pioneering trip through the northern sea route from Siberia through the Bering Straits to Vladivostok. And she visited Dickson Island

Family Album
By HUMPHREY PAKINGTON
"No novel commensurate with it has come out of England for many a day."—*N.Y.Times.* $2.50
NORTON

"Dear German People,"

The most daring trick of the century—hundreds of thousands of letters are mailed to German citizens from England—telling them the truths about their country which are hidden or distorted by Goebbels and his propaganda machine. These letters continue to pour into Germany; some are intercepted; most reach their destinations. THE LIVING AGE for September publishes *for the first time in this country* excerpts from these dramatic letters!

For indispensable, first-hand, *inside news*, you will find THE LIVING AGE incomparable. This is the only magazine which culls the very best from the foreign press for the benefit of American readers.

THE LIVING AGE
The World in Review
Introductory Offer—6 Months for $2!

THE LIVING AGE SR-819
420 Madison Avenue
New York City

Please send me *The Living Age* for 6 months. I enclose $2.00.

Name .....
Address .....
City and State .....

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the tremendous new experimental weather station, literally the heart of all aerial and sea traffic in the Soviet Arctic.

Of what value to the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs (which is behind the Yardley Foundation) Miss Gruber's information and reports may be, it is impossible for the layman to judge. But to the average reader, interested in the new as well as the old, and in the changing methods of life in the world today, "I Went to the Soviet Arctic" is a mine of information, presented in a sparkling and intensely interesting manner.

THE BEEPS. By Virginia Holton. Day. 1939. 192 *pp.* $2.

The Holtons were a kindly pair.
He was a four-square naval man.
They lived, God save us, out in Kansas.
When first the Beep affair began.
A sparrow with a mystic eye,
A manly, moral, little moppet
Began to follow them around.
Go where they would, they could not stop it.
In fact, beguiled by that bird's eye,
They never even chose to try.

The sparrow, Beep, on growing up,
Acquired a sleek, like-minded spouse
Who, scorning feathered-folks' shy ways
Just hung and fluttered round the house.
Wherever Mr. Holton went
The entourage would go, *in toto.*
They followed trains, they followed ships,
To Tokio and to Kyoto.
They guarded Mr., talked with Mrs.,
And, shocked by Shanghai, uttered hisses.

All up and down the smelly Yangtze,
Their language somewhat less than orphic,
The Beeps flew, talking, talking, talking—
Disgustingly anthropomorphic.
Despite the loss to Western Union,
They carried news like no one's business,
Flying through storms at sea and bombings
Without the slightest trace of dizziness.
They married when they thought about it,
But often bore their young without it.

Through countless thousand miles of air
These busy-bodied birds made flights,
Guarding and criticizing people.
(To me they seem like parasites!)
And Mrs. Holton, self-styled "Sweet"
Strikes me herself as fairly weevily.
No work of nature-faking yet
Was ever written so naively!
The birds might well bring suit for libel
For Mrs. H. could ruin the Bible.

R. H.

CLASSIFIED

ADVERTISING RATES for this Department are: For twenty-six insertions, 7c a word; for thirteen insertions, 8c a word; for six insertions, 9c a word; fewer insertions, 10c a word. Forms close Friday, eight days before publication date. The Saturday Review of Literature, 420 Madison Avenue, New York City.

LITERARY SERVICES

LITERARY AGENTS FOR 20 YEARS—Novels, short stories, books, articles, verse, plays, scenarios, radio scripts marketed. Editing, revision, criticism, typing, ghost writing. Beginners welcomed. Specialists in handling hard-to-sell manuscripts. Write now for information regarding our resultful service. WRITERS WORKSHOP, Inc., 570 Lexington Ave., at 51st., N. Y. C.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED SALES SERVICE for royalty publication: Stories, Novels, Articles, Books. Established manuscript placement record. "New" and "unknown" authors advised, promoted. Write for information. LAURENCE ROBERTS, LITERARY AGENT, 47 West 42nd St., N. Y.

STORIES, books, verse, drama, criticized, revised, marketed. Send MSS. No reading charge. Theses, speeches, ghost writing, reviews. MARANATHA WRITERS-SPEAKERS, 156 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C.

PAULINE RESNIKOFF—MANUSCRIPTS—excellently typed—corrected. Sincere, intelligent PERSONAL ATTENTION. MANUSCRIPT TYPING SERVICE, 242 Lexington Ave., N. Y. C.—LExington 2-4770.

CATHERINE WILSON—RESEARCH SERVICE. Manuscripts typed—corrected. References. 1142—4th Avenue, Los Angeles, California, REpublic 8644.

MOST AUTHORS NEED HELP! SALES! to book and magazine publishers, U. S. and foreign; also motion picture scripts. Advice on revision. Fifteen years with Houghton Mifflin and Atlantic Monthly. Mary R. Walsh, 6 Park St., Boston.

OUT-OF-PRINT

OUT-OF-PRINT AND HARD-TO-FIND books searched for and quickly supplied at low prices. No charge or obligation for service. Our system locates books of every description, all subjects and in all languages. Genealogies, family and town histories. London publications specialized in. First editions supplied. Incomplete sets completed. Magazine back numbers supplied. Send us your wants for immediate attention. AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICE, 117 West 48th Street, Dept. 300, New York, Telephone BRyant 9-5214. (Established 1921).

OUT-OF-PRINT books promptly supplied. National Bibliophile Service, 321 Fifth Avenue, New York.

SOURCE AND OUT-OF-PRINT book specialists for Authors, Collectors, Librarians, Researchers. Louis Greenfield, 420 Madison Ave., N. Y.

OUR SERVICE CONSISTS of supplying items for your Library which you cannot easily obtain. We are equipped to provide Out-of-Print Books, Periodicals, Prints, Autographs, and Art reproductions — foreign and domestic. A letter regarding your requirements will bring prompt attention without obligation. INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY GUILD, 1860 Broadway, Dept. B, New York.

BARGAIN OFFERS

20% SCHULTE'S SEMI-ANNUAL SALE DISCOUNT FOR CASH.
Over 500,000 Classified Selected Books
All plainly and reasonably priced.
Browsers welcome — Catalogues issued.
SCHULTE'S BOOKSTORE, INC.
80 Fourth Avenue, New York.

BOOKPLATES

LARGE ASSORTMENT to choose from. Albums loaned. 10c. The Bookplaters, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

GENERAL

Do you BELIEVE in Astrology? Don't! Mere belief is of no help. Doubt or know. Check up on Wynn's Astrology Magazine. All newsstands.

CLASSIFIED

BACK NUMBERS

BACK NUMBERS OF MAGAZINES at Abraham's Bookstore, 141 Fourth Ave., New York.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, traveling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 10 cents per word including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 420 Madison Avenue, New York City.

HANDWRITING scientifically analyzed, $2. Questions answered. Dr. Reiss, formerly Heidelberg. Box 174-D.

"GET OUT OF TOWN", Cool, Quiet, Elm Shaded, QUAKER HILL INN, Pawling, New York. 1,200' elevation. GOOD FOOD, Golf, Swimming, Tennis, Horse-back riding, secluded, no traffic 55 acres, RESTRICTED, 75 miles from mid-town Manhattan, 2 hours, Illustrated folder, Minimum $25.00 weekly. Telephone Pawling 321.

SWISS MEADOWS — 550 mountainside acres, woods, brooks, fields; century-old farmhouse, new Swiss Chalet, cement swimming pool; golf, tennis, riding nearby. Illustrated folder. Mrs. Cornelia S. Parker, Williamstown, Mass.

DO YOU LIKE mountain climbing, beautiful scenery, peace & quiet, swimming in very large swimming pool, tennis, badminton and other sports? Do you insist on simple, wholesome homecooking? Is one of your "MUSTS" extra comfortable inner spring beds? Then come to FERNCROFT, WONALANCET, N. H. "A Mountain Inn where Nature and Hospitality are Richly Bountiful." 700 acres in center of Sandwich Mountains. Trails to SEVEN MOUNTAINS START at FERNCROFT. $26.00 to $35.00 weekly including meals. Write NOW for large booklet.

MAINE, CAMDEN—14 room summer construction cottage, 7 acres, shore frontage, sale reasonable price. L. S. Waterbury.

"HILLSIDE INN", Lyme, Conn. Quiet and restful. Excellent food. Real country life.

SILVERMINE TAVERN & GALLERIES—THE OLD MILL—An old time country inn at the water's edge—outdoor dining terraces. Booklet, Norwalk, Conn. Tel. 88.

"GREEN SHADOWS", Old Lyme, Conn. A delightful place for summer vacations. Good food. Reasonable rates.

WRITE TODAY for YOUR FREE copy of "The Autobiography of a Modern Old Lady" which will tell YOU all about this fascinating 140 year old COLONIAL INN with THE VIEW of Lake WINNEPESAUKEE and the WHITE MOUNTAINS. Jean and Todd Wallace provide their Christian clientèle with New England cooking that has an indefinable tang that's delicious. Dining Porch, inner spring beds, rooms with & without bath, 300 acre playground. One mile to Belknap Mts. Climbing, swimming, golf & all sports. $20.00 per week—$5.00 per day—No extras. Holiday House, Gilford-Laconia, N. H. The Inn that's delightfully different!

PEACEFUL RECREATION in the foothills, colonial atmosphere, amiable companions. All year. With or without bath. Restricted. The Farm on the Hill, Box 414, Stone Ridge, N. Y.

BACHELOR, fortyish, cultural background, will share with man, comfortable lakeside country home set in five wooded acres one hour from Chicago. Furnace, fireplace, piano, electric organ and all conveniences. Ideal for writer or musician who wants several undisturbed hours daily in location relatively near city. Total monthly cost about sixty dollars. References exchanged. Box 410-D.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PERSONALS

LOST: The tranquility of the English countryside, the sense of security in London streets. To discover where and why, send $2 to Box 402-D, The Saturday Review, for NIGHT OVER ENGLAND by Eugene and Arline Löhrke.

RESOURCEFUL HOUSEKEEPER, good cook, baker, full charge small home. Drives car. Box 403-D.

WILL GIVE MAGNIFICENT watch dog to animal lover *in country.* Cross between Irish wolfhound and Police. Young, used to children; very gentle; ferocious bark, no bite. Box 404-D.

DRIVING NEW YORK early September; will take male passenger, share driving, expenses. Box 102, Preuss Sta., Los Angeles.

GEORGE APLEY'S SUCCESSOR, submerged in Manhattan; unconfirmed diffident bachelor wishes interesting feminine correspondent with high ideals, tolerant mind, stout heart and playful disposition, not too clever. Box 368-D.

AVOID MUSEUM FATIGUE! Take along "What to Do in a Museum," by Carl Thurston; 12c postpaid. Esto Publishing Co., Pasadena, California.

WANTED: Job or position preferably in East, by Southern girl, twenty-four, university graduate, three years secretarial experience, intelligent, personable. Box 405-D.

SIAMESE KITTENS, home-raised, affectionate. C. F. A. Stock. Male, $25.00. Female, $20.00. Box 292, Bethel, Maine.

WE HAVE WITH LEAVENED AND PREPARED CHOICE fashioned Mi Casa for comfort. Tucked in Mexican village of La Luz, veritable oasis, is this old adobe inn. Live in the shadow of a mountain peak, look out on the redoubtable White Sands, (picnic distance) ride good cowponies, pick Silver Moon roses or eat an insuperable soufflé; listen to Brahms 1st. or find Sagittarius . . . these, if you share our western adventure! Osborne Wood, La Luz, (reputed most equable climate in United States) New Mexico.

YOUNG WOMAN with experience in playground work and teaching would like position, not necessarily in these fields. Free to travel. Box 406-D.

WILD HONEY—Fifty-five cents a pint, prepaid. Thousand Wings Farm, Hiwasse, Arkansas.

FOR CREATIVE WORK OR REST—Would you like to find "a lodge in some vast wilderness" to do your work or to rest creatively? There is such a lodge among Pennsylvania pines. Mabel Leslie Fleischer, 129 E. 17th St., New York.

QUIET RETREAT. Enjoy fine comfortable old white house, 8 rm., in pleasant Vermont village, 10 m. from Fair Haven. State road. New cement basement and cistern. Electric garage, shop, well, 1 acre lot, garden. Ideal for 2 or 3 yr. lease at $12 mo. as is, or $20 mo. equipped plumbing. J. L. Wheeler, Fair Haven, Vt.

BUSINESS WOMAN'S elevator apartment, 48th St. & Madison Ave. Available during day for writer or instructor. North light. Box 408-D.

BUSINESS GIRL having furniture seeks girl rent and share London Terrace apartment. Box 409-D.

POTENTIAL BIG NAME writer must find inspiring, inexpensive home in city for few months. Will take excellent care of some wanderer's apartment. References, Moore, 210 Old Middletown Road, Pearl River, N. Y.

COTTAGE IN BERKSHIRES available September, October. Living-room with fireplace, screened porch, kitchen, bath, two bedrooms. Fully equipped. Desirable for anyone wanting quiet to work or to rest and enjoy. Katherine Frazier, Cummington, Mass.

FOR SALE. Country property, 300 acres for Club, Fishing and Hunting. Large house. Susie E. Bradway, Monson, Mass.

SEEKING WASHINGTON, D. C., young man, civilized tastes life and arts, to share apartment. Box 411-D.

Double-Crostics: No. 282

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

■	■	1-L	2-R	3-G	4-O	■	5-F	6-D	■	7-P	8-J	9-L	10-Q	11-H	■	12-R
13-C	14-T	15-J	16-G	17-L	18-P	19-F	20-D	■	21-Q	22-K	23-S	24-G	25-D	26-Y	27-L	28-E
29-F	30-M	31-W	■	32-A	33-E	■	34-P	35-I	36-N	37-D	38-C	39-Y	40-A	■	41-W	42-U
43-J	44-I	45-C	46-L	■	47-B	48-K	49-E	■	50-X	51-K	52-U	53-N	54-I	55-R	56-Y	57-C
■	58-Q	59-P	60-A	61-M	■	62-N	63-F	64-X	■	65-R	66-L	67-C	68-E	69-N	■	70-S
71-X	72-C	73-M	74-E	■	75-L	76-P	77-S	78-Q	79-V	80-N	81-I	82-J	83-D	84-K	■	85-L
86-P	87-D	88-B	89-R	90-H	■	91-K	92-M	93-C	94-A	■	95-P	96-V	97-Q	98-I	99-W	100-T
■	101-K	102-X	103-J	104-R	105-C	106-S	107-H	■	108-I	109-O	110-D	■	111-T	112-D	113-Y	114-J
■	115-U	116-G	117-R	118-K	■	119-S	120-O	121-C	122-M	■	123-O	■	124-V	125-S	126-T	127-F
128-D	129-I	130-L	131-H	■	132-B	133-V	■	134-I	135-A	136-M	■	137-U	138-S	139-Y	140-F	■
141-M	142-Y	■	■	143-A	144-Y	145-E	■	146-P	147-C	148-N	149-V	■	150-O	151-C	152-A	153-M
154-R	155-W	156-T	157-G	158-Q	■	159-L	160-X	161-I	162-N	■	163-M	164-O	165-B	■	166-M	167-V
168-X	■	169-S	170-F	171-B	172-O	■	173-B	■	174-X	175-C	176-D	177-R	178-P	■	179-F	■
180-5	181-J	182-X	183-K	184-H	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. New Testament of the Douay Bible.

B. Capital city of Balnibarbi *(Gulliver's Travels.)*

C. Make worldly-wise.

D. One willing to compromise.

E. Cycle of nine gods (Egypt. Rel.)

F. Province in Spain.

G. Applause.

H. Donkey.

I. Critical remark; censure.

J. Excel or defeat in a game.

K. Symphony by Dvorak (2 wds.)

L. Considerate.

M. Worship of strange gods.

N. American novelist (1901-—.)

O. One of a pagan people in the Philippines.

P. Bring or receive into close connection.

Q. With precision.

R. Embezzle.

S. Having two propeller screws (comp.)

T. Irritate.

U. Something which draws or attracts.

V. Non-Mohammedan (Arabian.)

W. Free from trouble or constraint.

X. Ecstatic utterance or work.

Y. Light bridle bit.

WORDS

—	—	—	—	—	—	—						
40	135	152	143	32	60	94						
—	—	—	—	—	—							
171	173	88	47	165	132							
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
105	151	175	38	72	57	93	67	45	147	121	13	
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
128	83	176	110	6	25	87	20	112	37			
—	—	—	—	—	—							
74	33	145	68	28	49							
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—				
19	179	29	140	63	127	5	170					
—	—	—	—	—								
116	157	3	16	24								
—	—	—	—	—								
131	184	11	90	107								
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—			
98	134	44	129	108	81	35	54	161				
—	—	—	—	—	—	—						
103	82	15	181	18	43	114						
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—					
48	84	91	101	22	51	118	183					
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—			
1	66	130	9	85	46	17	159	27	75			
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
163	30	73	141	61	122	136	92	153	166			
—	—	—	—	—	—	—						
148	80	69	62	36	53	162						
—	—	—	—	—	—	—						
4	123	172	120	164	150	109						
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—				
59	7	34	18	95	76	86	146	178				
—	—	—	—	—	—							
97	10	21	78	58	158							
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—				
177	55	154	2	104	65	117	12	89				
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—			
77	119	138	23	180	169	125	106	70				
—	—	—	—	—								
126	14	156	111	100								
—	—	—	—									
137	52	115	42									
—	—	—	—	—	—							
149	167	124	133	96	79							
—	—	—	—									
99	155	41	31									
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—					
160	71	182	50	174	102	64	168					
—	—	—	—	—	—	—						
56	26	144	139	142	113	39						

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Before the Fall Rush—these New Literary Items

FRANK R. STOCKTON
By Martin I. J. Griffin
First biography of the author of "The Lady or the Tiger?" and other important contributions to American literature. $2.00

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS
By Mary A. Bennett
A critical study of the very popular New England literary figure of the 19th century. $2.00

HENRY BLAKE FULLER
By Constance M. Griffin
The life and works of one of the most versatile and talented American writers who has been strangely neglected by the reading public. $1.50

THOMAS CARLYLE
AND THE ART OF HISTORY
By Louise M. Young
A justification of Carlyle's theory of history through a study of influences and his creative methods. $2.00

KIPLING'S READING
AND ITS INFLUENCE ON POETRY
By Ann M. Weygandt
An exhaustive examination of Kipling's verse to prove that he was a profound student of the whole body of English literature. $2.00

Recently Published

SANTAYANA
By George W. Howgate
"The most complete biography of the distinguished philosopher . . . scholarly, precise, always informative and well written." N. Y. HERALD-TRIBUNE $3.50

THREE AMERICANISTS
HENRY HARRISSE : GEORGE BRINLEY
THOMAS JEFFERSON
By Randolph G. Adams
"A brilliant contribution to the literature of American book collecting." N. Y. TIMES $1.50

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
PRESS: Philadelphia

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

IT'S a pity one never thinks of the perfect Birthday Present at the right moment. For a 37th Birthday, for instance—a very rare age, we believe; most of our friends are either older or younger than that—the ideal gift would be *Conrad in Quest of His Youth* by Leonard Merrick, who died the other day. Conrad, the wistful hero of that idyll, who thought himself so elderly, was that age. ☞The passing of Leonard Merrick gave us strong personal regret: he was a modest and most lovable creature, we first came across his writings when we were a boy in college and we read after him faithfully to the end. We remember with pleasure his visit to New York in 1925 and the dinner given him at the Coffee House by Mr. John Macrae.

☞The *S.R.L.'s* London correspondent, Mr. John Hadfield, was good enough some time ago to send us the full text of the Public Orator's presentation of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse for an honorary degree at Oxford. ☞Old Q. himself is not familiar enough with the characters of Mr. Wodehouse's comedies to catch all the allusions to the Empress of Blandings and the love life of the newts. But where the Horatian hexameters spoke of Mr. Wodehouse in general terms we were prompt to enjoy:—

> Ecce auctor magicus, quo non expertior alter
> delectare animos hominum risusque movere.
> Namque novas scaenae personas intulit et res
> ridiculas cuique adiunxit. . . .
> Non vitia autem hominum naso suspendit adunco
> sed tenera pietate notat, peccataque ridet.
> Hoc quoque, lingua etsi repleat plebeia chartas,
> non incomposito patitur pede currere verba,
> concinnus, lepidus, puri sermonis amator.

Or, as one might translate, losing the brevity of the Latin:

> Lo, a magical writer, no other more skillful than he to delight the spirits of men and stir their laughter. He brought new characters on the scene and added absurd circumstance to each of them. He does not make men's foibles as plain as a crooked nose on your face, but observes them with kindly piety and smiles at errors. And this also, even when he fills his pages with slang his words do not move on slovenly feet; he is elegant, smooth, and a lover of skilled speech.

☞Speaking of Oxford, the Oxford University Press has added *The Small House at Allington* (2 volumes) to its always increasing list of Trollopes in the World's Classics Series (80c a volume). The end papers give a map of Barsetshire as reconstructed by Mgr. Ronald Knox. ☞We are interested in a letter of Mr. Alfred E. Hamill to the *Book Collector's Packet* suggesting that the handwriting of authors (particularly poets) is likely to be illegible "because their ideas race much more fleetly than their hands. Their minds are intolerant of any obstacle. Literary men are not illegible from choice, but from the nature of their exertion, which is primarily intellectual rather than plastic."

☞S. S., a Latin teacher in Peoria, Ill., writes that she owes to this column her enjoyment of creepers by Patricia Wentworth and Michael Innes. She adds that she thinks *Murder Recalls Van Kill* (we are uncertain of the authorship, though we've seen the book around) is as good as either, even a little better; especially, she says, in its translations from the classics. ☞There's a new Patricia Wentworth, by the way, *The Blind Side.* Perhaps not one of her very best, but still well readable. ☞Bobbs-Merrill confide the interesting fact that L. Frank Baum got the name Oz for his famous juvenile from index letters on a filing case. There were three drawers, labelled A-G, H-N, and O-Z. The last of them gave him the imaginary name he was hunting. ☞There is a card index of book titles in the *S.R.L.* office that has always amused us; its divisions are so agreeably apropos that we suspect someone split it up that way on purpose. For instance we see the following sections:—Lo!—Lytton; Reno—Romantici; Selective—Silken; Thirsty—Titian; Moods—Mutter. ☞This business of sealing things up for posterity is getting a bit too gaga—by the way, we found that same word, spelled *gugga,* in a story by Colonel E. D. Swinton written before 1913, and with the implication that it was a word native to India. ☞The latest venturer along that line is Oglethorpe University in Georgia which is stocking a Crypt of Civilization with microfilm of important books. The crypt is supposed to remain "inviolate" until 8113 A.D. Why 8113 Old Q. has no idea. ☞Another idea, even older, comes in a letter from Garland, Pa. Our correspondent writes, "I am making a collection of mementoes for permanent preservation in the Drake Well Museum, shrine to the world's first oil well, located at Titusville, Pa."

☞Adding another pleasure to our new neighborhood on Madison Avenue we discovered a French épicerie across the way where they keep in stock the good old Cooper's Marmalade, which we had not tasted in many years; the only marmalade of our experience that has a real Thomas Hardy savor of bitterness. ☞We are wondering though about something we see listed in their catalogue: The *Kathleen Norris Herb Chest* at $3. We wonder what selection it contains?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED